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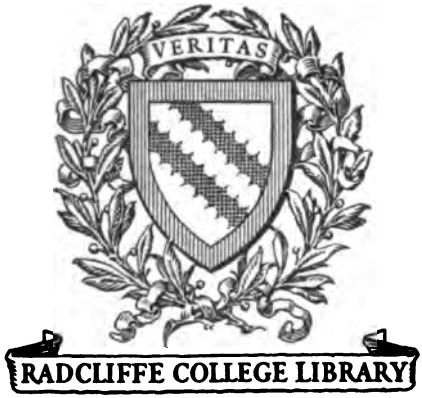

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WHAT EIGHT MILLION WOMEN WANT

CONVENTION OF CLUB WOMEN AT HOTEL ASTOR, NEW YORK
A typical gathering, well-dressed, intelligent, business-like.

H. S. Luscomb

WHAT EIGHT MILLION WOMEN WANT

BY

RHETA CHILDE DORR

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TO

THE AMERICAN REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE EIGHT MILLION—
THE EIGHT HUNDRED THOUSAND MEMBERS
OF THE GENERAL FEDERATION OF
WOMEN'S CLUBS—
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

Many of the chapters contained in this volume appeared as special articles in *Hampton's Magazine*, to the editor of which the author's thanks are due for permission to republish.

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WHAT EIGHT MILLION WOMEN WANT

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

For the audacity of the title of this book I offer no apology. I have had it pointed out, not altogether facetiously, that it is impossible to determine with accuracy what one woman, much less what any number of women, wants. I sympathize with the first half of the tradition. The desires, that is to say, the ideals, of an individual, man or woman, are not always easy to determine. The individual is complex and exceedingly prone to variation. The mass alone is consistent. The ideals of the mass of women are wrapped in mystery simply because no one has cared enough about them to inquire what they are.

Men, ardently, eternally, interested in Woman — one woman at a time — are almost never even faintly interested in women. Strangely, deliberately ignorant of women, they argue that their ignorance is justified by an innate unknowableness of the sex.

I am persuaded that the time is at hand when this sentimental, half contemptuous attitude of half the population towards the other half will have to be abandoned. I believe that the time has arrived when self-interest, if other motive be lacking, will compel society to examine the ideals of women. In support of this opinion I ask you to consider three facts, each one of which is so patent that it requires no argument.

The Census of 1900 reported nearly six million women in the United States engaged in wage earning outside their homes. Between 1890 and 1900 the number of women in industry increased faster than the number of men in industry. *It increased faster than the birth rate.* The number of women wage earners at the present date can only be estimated. Nine

million would be a conservative guess. Nine million women who have forsaken the traditions of the hearth and are competing with men in the world of paid labor, means that women are rapidly passing from the domestic control of their fathers and their husbands. Surely this is the most important economic fact in the world to-day.

Within the past twenty years no less than nine hundred and fifty-four thousand divorces have been granted in the United States. Two thirds of these divorces were granted to aggrieved wives. In spite of the anathemas of the church, in the face of tradition and early precept, in defiance of social ostracism, accepting, in the vast majority of cases, the responsibility of self support, more than six hundred thousand women, in the short space of twenty years, repudiated the burden of uncongenial marriage. Without any doubt this is the most important social fact we have had to face since the slavery question was settled.

Not only in the United States, but in every

constitutional country in the world the movement towards admitting women to full political equality with men is gathering strength. In half a dozen countries women are already completely enfranchised. In England the opposition is seeking terms of surrender. In the United States the stoutest enemy of the movement acknowledges that woman suffrage is ultimately inevitable. The voting strength of the world is about to be doubled, and the new element is absolutely an unknown quantity. Does any one question that this is the most important political fact the modern world has ever faced?

I have asked you to consider three facts, but in reality they are but three manifestations of one fact, to my mind the most important human fact society has yet encountered. Women have ceased to exist as a subsidiary class in the community. They are no longer wholly dependent, economically, intellectually, and spiritually, on a ruling class of men. They look on life with the eyes of reasoning adults, where once they

regarded it as trusting children. Women now form a new social group, separate, and to a degree homogeneous. Already they have evolved a group opinion and a group ideal.

And this brings me to my reason for believing that society will soon be compelled to make a serious survey of the opinions and ideals of women. As far as these have found collective expressions, it is evident that they differ very radically from accepted opinions and ideals of men. As a matter of fact, it is inevitable that this should be so. Back of the differences between the masculine and the feminine ideal lie centuries of different habits, different duties, different ambitions, different opportunities, different rewards.

I shall not here attempt to outline what the differences have been or why they have existed. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, in *Women and Economics,* did this before me, — did it so well that it need never be done again. I merely wish to point out that different habits of action necessarily result, after long centuries, in differ-

ent habits of thought. Men, accustomed to habits of strife, pursuit of material gains, immediate and tangible rewards, have come to believe that strife is not only inevitable but desirable; that material gain and visible reward are alone worth coveting. In this commercial age strife means business competition, reward means money. Man, in the aggregate, thinks in terms of money profit and money loss, and try as he will, he cannot yet think in any other terms.

I have in mind a certain rich young man, who, when he is not superintending the work of his cotton mills in Virginia, is giving his time to settlement work in the city of Washington. The rich young man is devoted to the settlement. One day he confided to a guest of the house, a social worker of note, that he wished he might dedicate his entire life to philanthropy.

"There is much about a commercial career that is depressing to a sympathetic nature," he declared. "For example, it constantly de-

presses me to observe the effect of the cotton mills on the girls in my employ. They come in from the country, fresh, blooming, and eager to work. Within a few months perhaps they are pale, anæmic, listless. Not infrequently a young girl contracts tuberculosis and dies before one realizes that she is ill. It wrings the heart to see it."

"I suspect," said the visitor, "that there is something wrong with your mills. Are you sure that they are sufficiently well ventilated?"

"They are as well ventilated as we can have them," said the rich young man. "Of course we cannot keep the windows open."

"Why not?" persisted the visitor.

"Because in our mills we spin both black and white yarn, and if the windows were kept open the lint from the black yarn would blow on the white yarn and ruin it."

A quick vision rose before the visitor's consciousness, of a mill room, noisy with clacking machinery, reeking with the mingled odors of perspiration and warm oil, obscure with flying

cotton flakes which covered the forms of the workers like snow and choked in their throats like desert sand.

"But," she exclaimed, "you can have two rooms, one for the white yarn and the other for the black."

The rich young man shook his head with the air of one who goes away exceedingly sorrowful.

"No," he replied, "we can't. The business won't stand it."

This story presents in miniature the social attitude of the majority of men. They cannot be held entirely responsible. Their minds automatically function just that way. They have high and generous impulses, their hearts are susceptible to tenderest pity, they often possess the vision of brotherhood and human kinship, but habit, long habit, always intervenes in time to save the business from loss of a few dollars profit.

Three years ago Chicago was on the eve of one of its periodical "vice crusades," of which

more later. Sensational stories had been published in several newspapers, to the effect that no fewer than five thousand Jewish girls were leading lives of shame in the city, a statement which was received with horror by the Jewish population of Chicago. A meeting of wealthy and influential men and women was called in the law library of a well known jurist and philanthropist. Representatives from various social settlements in Jewish quarters of the town were invited, and it was as a guest of one of these settlements that I was privileged to be present.

Eloquent addresses were made and an elaborate plan for investigation and relief was outlined. Finally it came to a point where ways and means had to be considered. The presiding officer put this phase of the matter to the conference with smiling frankness. "You must realize, ladies and gentlemen," he said, "that we have entered upon an extensive and, I am afraid, a very expensive campaign."

At this a middle aged and notably dignified man arose and said with emotion trembling in his voice: "Mr. Chairman, and ladies and gentlemen of the conference, this surely is no time for us to think of economy of expenditure. If the daughters of Israel are losing their ancient dower of purity, the sons of Israel should be willing, nay, eager to ransom them at any cost. Permit me, as a privileged honor which I value highly, to offer, as a contribution towards the preliminary expenses of this campaign, my check for ten thousand dollars."

He sat down to that polite little murmur of applause which goes round the room, and I whispered to the head resident of the settlement of which I was a guest, an inquiry as to the identity of the generous donor.

"That gentleman," she whispered in reply, "is one of the owners of a great mail order department store in Chicago." She sighed deeply, as she added: "During the first week of the panic that store discharged, without warning, five hundred girls."

These typical examples of the reasoning processes of men are offered without the slightest rancor. They had to be given in order that the woman's habit of thought might be explained with clearness.

Women, since society became an organized body, have been engaged in the rearing, as well as the bearing of children. They have made the home, they have cared for the sick, ministered to the aged, and given to the poor. The universal destiny of the mass of women trained them to feed and clothe, to invent, manufacture, build, repair, contrive, conserve, economize. They lived lives of constant service, within the narrow confines of a home. Their labor was given to those they loved, and the reward they looked for was purely a spiritual reward.

A thousand generations of service, unpaid, loving, intimate, must have left the strongest kind of a mental habit in its wake. Women, when they emerged from the seclusion of their homes and began to mingle in the world pro-

cession, when they were thrown on their own financial responsibility, found themselves willy nilly in the ranks of the producers, the wage earners; when the enlightenment of education was no longer denied them, when their responsibilities ceased to be entirely domestic and became somewhat social, when, in a word, women began to *think*, they naturally thought in human terms. They could n't have thought otherwise if they had tried.

They might have learned, it is true. In certain circumstances women might have been persuaded to adopt the commercial habit of thought. But the circumstances were exactly propitious for the encouragement of the old-time woman habit of service. The modern thinking, planning, self-governing, educated woman came into a world which is losing faith in the commercial ideal, and is endeavoring to substitute in its place a social ideal. She came into a generation which is reaching passionate hands towards democracy. She became one with a nation which is weary of wars and

hatreds, impatient with greed and privilege, sickened of poverty, disease, and social injustice. The modern, free-functioning woman accepted without the slightest difficulty these new ideals of democracy and social service. Where men could do little more than theorize in these matters, women were able easily and effectively to act.

I hope that I shall not be suspected of ascribing to women any ingrained or fundamental moral superiority to men. Women are not better than men. The mantle of moral superiority forced upon them as a substitute for intellectual equality they accepted, because they could not help themselves. They dropped it as soon as the substitute was no longer necessary.

That the mass of women are invariably found on the side of the new ideals is no evidence of their moral superiority to men; it is merely evidence of their intellectual youth.

Visitors from western cities and towns are often amazed, and vastly amused, to find in

New York and other eastern cities little narrow-gauge street car lines, where gaunt horses haul the shabbiest of cars over the oldest and roughest of road beds. The Westerner declares that nowhere in the East does he find surface cars that equal in comfort and elegance the cars recently installed in his Michigan or Nebraska or Washington home town.

"Recently installed." There you have it.

The eastern city retains its horse cars and its out-of-date electric rolling stock because it has them, and because there are all sorts of difficulties in the way of replacing them. Old franchises have to expire or otherwise be got rid of; corporations have to be coaxed or coerced; greed and corruption often have to be overcome; huge sums of money have to be appropriated; a whole machinery of municipal government has to be set in motion before the old and established city can change its traction system.

The new western town goes on foot until it

attains to a certain size and a sufficient prosperity. Then it installs electric railways, and of course it purchases the newest and most modern of the available models.

New social ideals are difficult for men to acquire in a practical way because their minds are filled with old traditions, inherited memories, outworn theories of law, government, and social control. They cannot get rid of these at once. They have used them so long, have found them so convenient, so satisfactory, that even when you show them something admittedly better, they are able only partially to comprehend and to accept.

Women, on the other hand, have very few antiques to get rid of. Until recently their minds, scantily furnished with a few personal preferences and personal prejudices, were entirely bare of community ideals or any social theory. When they found themselves in need of a social theory it was only natural that they should choose the most modern, the most progressive, the most idealistic. They made their

choice unconsciously, and they began the application of their new-found theory almost automatically. The machinery they employed was the long derided, misconceived, and unappreciated Women's Club.

CHAPTER II

FROM CULTURE CLUBS TO SOCIAL SERVICE

Unless you have lived in a live town in the Middle West — say in Michigan, or Indiana, or Nebraska — you cannot have a very adequate idea of how ugly, and dirty, and neglected, and disreputable a town can be when nobody loves it. The railway station is a long, low, rakish thing of boards, painted a muddy maroon color. Around it is a stretch of bare ground strewn with ashes. Beyond lies the main street, with some good business blocks, — a First National Bank in imposing granite, and a Masonic Temple in pressed brick. The high school occupies a treeless, grassless, wind-swept block by itself.

In the center of the residential section of the town is a big, unsightly, hummocky vacant place, vaguely known as the park — or the

place where they are going to have a park, when the city gets around to it. At present it is a convenient spot wherein to dump tin cans, empty bottles, broken crockery, old shoes, and other residue. When the wind blows, in the spring and fall, a fine assortment of desiccated rubbish is wafted up and down, and into the neighbors' dooryards.

Everybody is busy in these live towns. Everybody is prosperous, and patriotic, and law-abiding, and respectable. The business of "getting on" absorbs the entire time and attention of the men. They "get on" so well, for the most part, that their wives have plenty of leisure on their hands, and the latter occupy a portion of their leisure by belonging to a club, organized for the study of the art of the Renaissance, Chinese religions before Confucius, or the mystery of Browning. The club meets every second Wednesday, and the members read papers, after which there is tea and a social hour. The papers vary in degree alone, as the writer happens to be a skimmer, a wader,

or a deep-sea diver in standard editions of the encyclopedias. The social hour, however, occasionally develops in a direction quite away from the realms of pure culture.

Such a town, with such a woman's club, was Lake City, Minnesota, a few years ago. Lake City had a busy and a prosperous male population, a woman's club bent on intellectual uplift, and a place where there was going to be a park. One windy second Wednesday the club members arrived with their eyes full of dust, soot on their white gloves, and indignation in their hearts. When tea and the social hour came around culture went by the board and the conversation turned to the perfectly disgraceful way in which the town's street cleaning was conducted.

"The streets are bad enough," said one member, "but, after all, one expects the streets to be dusty. What I object to is having a city dump-heap at my front door. Have any of you crossed my corner of the park since the snow melted?"

She drew a lively picture of a state of things gravely menacing to the health of her neighborhood, and that of all the people whose homes faced the neglected square.

"Why does n't somebody complain to the authorities?" she concluded. "Why don't we do something about it? The next time we meet we might at least adopt resolutions, or, better still, have a committee appointed. What do you think, Madam President?"

Madam President tapped her teaspoon on the edge of her empty cup. "I think," she said, "that we will come to order and do it now. Will you put what you have just suggested in the form of a motion?"

At the next meeting of the club the committee to investigate the park made its report. The club members began a lively canvass among real estate owners and business men, and before long an astonished city council found itself on its feet, receiving a deputation from the woman's club. The women came armed with a donation of fifteen hundred dol-

lars cash, and a polite, but firm, demand that the money be used to clean up and plant the park.

The council replied that it had always intended to get around to that park, and would have done it long ago but for the fact that there was no park board in existence, and could not be one, because the Solons who drew up the city charter had forgotten to put in a provision for such a board.

The club held more meetings, and appointed more committees. One of these unearthed a State law which seemed to cover the case, and make a park board possible without the direct assistance of a city charter. The city attorney was visited, and somehow was coaxed, or argued, or bullied into giving a favorable opinion, after which the election of a park board followed as a matter of course. The town suddenly became interested in the park. The club women's fifteen hundred dollars was doubled by popular subscription, and the work of turning a town rubbish heap into

a cool and shady garden spot was brief but durable.

You would n't know the Lake City of those years if you saw it to-day. They have an attractive railroad station, paved streets, cement sidewalks, public playgrounds for children, a high school set in a shaded square, and residence streets that look like parkways. And the woman's club was the parent of them all.

There is a theory which expresses itself somewhat obviously in the phrase: "Whatever all the women of the country want they will get." The theory is a convenient one, because it may be used to defer action on any suggested reform, and it is harmless because of the seeming impossibility of ascertaining what all the women of the country really want. The women of the United States and the women of all the world have discovered a means through which they may express their collective opinions and desires: organization, and more organization. Lake City is but one instance in a thousand.

CULTURE CLUBS TO SOCIAL SERVICE

When American women began, a generation ago, to form themselves into clubs, and later to join these clubs into state federations of clubs, and finally the state federations into a national body, they did not dream that they were going to express a collective opinion. Indeed, at that time not very many had opinions worth expressing. The immediate need of women's souls at the beginning of the club movement was for education; the higher education they missed by not going to college, and they formed their clubs with the sole object of self-culture.

The study period did not last very long. In fact it was doomed from the beginning, for it is not in the nature of women, or at least it is not in the habit of women, to do things for themselves alone. They have *served* for so many generations that they have learned to like serving better than anything else in the world, and they add service to the pursuit of culture, just as some of them add the important postscript to the unimportant letter.

Thus Dallas, Texas, had a women's club of

the culture caste. One spring day, after the star member had read a paper on the "Lake Poets," and another member had rendered a Chopin *étude* on the piano, they began to talk about the stegomyia mosquito, and what a pity it was that the annual danger of contagion and death from the bite of that insect had to be faced all over again. Pools of water all over town, simply swarming with little wriggling things, soon to emerge as full-armed stegomyias, merely because the city authorities had n't the money, or said they had n't, to cover the pools with oil.

"Why, oil is n't very expensive," said one of the club women. "Let 's buy a whole lot of it and do the work ourselves."

So the work of saving hundreds of lives every year was added to the study of "Lake Poets" and Chopin by the Women's Club of Dallas. The members mapped the city, laid it out in districts, organized their forces, bought oil and oil-cans and set forth. They visited the schools, got teachers and pupils interested, and

secured their co-operation. The study of city sanitation was soon put into the school curriculum, and oiling pools of standing water in every quarter of the town is now a regular part of the school program in the upper grades. Every year the club women renew the agitation, and every year the school children go out with their teachers and cover the pools with oil.

That story could be paralleled in almost any city in the United States. Clubs everywhere organized for the intellectual advancement of the members, for the culture of music, art, and crafts, soon added to the original object a department of philanthropy, a department of public school decoration, a department of child labor, a department of civics. The day a women's club adopts civics as a side line to literature, that day it ceases to be a private association and becomes a public institution — and the public sometimes finds this out before the club suspects it.

An Eastern woman was visiting in San Fran-

cisco a short time before the fire. In the complication of three streets with names almost identical, she lost her way to the reception whither she was bound. The conductor on the last car she tried before going home was deeply sympathetic.

"'T is a shame, ma'am, them streets," he declared. "I 've always said there was no sense at all in havin' them named like that. A stranger is bound to go wrong. I 'll tell you what you do, ma'am: you go straight to Mrs. Lovell White, she that bosses the women's clubs, you know, ma'am. You tell her about them streets, and she 'll have 'em changed."

The conductor's simple faith in the Women's Club of San Francisco did not lack justification. In the intervals of studying Browning and antique art, the club found time to discover to San Francisco all sorts of things that the city wanted and needed without knowing that it did.

"We ought to have a flower market," pronounced the club.

"Nonsense," said the City Council. "Besides, where is the money to come from?"

"We 'll establish the flower market and show you," returned the club.

They did. They found a centrally located square, the place where people would be likely to go for an early morning sale of potted plants and cut flowers. Prices are moderate in outdoor markets, and nothing else so stimulates in an entire community the gardening instinct, usually confined to a few individuals. The city authorities discovered that the flower market filled a long-felt want. So the city took the market over.

These activities were more or less local. Others, begun as local affairs, ultimately became national in scope. The movement which has resulted in a national program in favor of public playgrounds for children began as a women's club movement. For a dozen years before the Playgrounds Association of America came into existence, women's clubs all over the country had been establishing playgrounds,

supporting them out of their club treasuries, and using every power of persuasion to educate boards of education and city councils in their favor.

Pittsburg affords a typical instance. In 1896 there was a Civic Club of Allegheny County, composed of women of the twin steel cities of Pittsburg and Allegheny. At the head of its Education Department there was a woman, Miss Beulah Kennard, who loved children; not beautifully clean, well behaved, curled and polished children, but just children. Children attracted Miss Kennard to such a degree that she could n't bear the sight of them wallowing in the grime and soot of Pittsburg streets and alleys. Often she stopped in her walks to watch them, dodging wagons and automobiles; throwing stones, tossing balls, fighting, and shooting craps; stealing apples from push-carts, getting arrested and being dragged through the farce of a trial at law for the crime of playing.

"Those children," Miss Kennard told her

club, "have got to have a decent place to play this summer." And the club agreed with her. The treasury yielded for a beginning the modest sum of one hundred and twenty-five dollars, and with this money the women fitted out one schoolyard, large enough for sixty children to play in. There was no trouble about getting the sixty together. They came, a noisy, joyous, turbulent, vacation set of children, and the anxious committee from the club looked at them in great trepidation of spirit and said to one another: "What on earth are we going to do with them, now that we've got them here?"

With hardly a ghost of precedent to guide them, the club undertook the work, and as women have had considerable experience in taking care of children at home, they soon discovered ways of taking care of them successfully in the playground.

The next summer the Civic Club invested six hundred dollars in playgrounds. Two schoolyards were fitted up in Pittsburg and

two in Allegheny. After that, every summer, the work was extended. More money each year was voted, and additional playgrounds were established. In the summer of 1899, three years after the first experiment, Pittsburg children had nine playgrounds and Allegheny children had three, all gifts of the women. By another year the committee was handling thousands of dollars and managing an enterprise of considerable magnitude. Also their work was attracting the admiration of other club women, who asked for an opportunity to co-operate. In 1900 practically all the clubs of the two cities united, and formed a joint committee of the Women's Clubs of Pittsburg and vicinity to take charge of playgrounds.

All this time the work was entirely in the hands of the club women, who bought the apparatus, organized the games, employed the trained supervisors, and supplied from their own membership the volunteer workers, without whom the enterprise would have been a

CARPENTER SHOP, VACATION SCHOOL, PITTSBURGH
Established by club women and for years supported by them.

failure from the start. The Board of Education co-operated to the extent of lending schoolyards. Finally the Board of Education decided to vote an annual contribution of money.

In 1902 the city of Pittsburg woke up and gave the women fifteen hundred dollars, with which they established one more playground and a recreation park. The original one hundred and twenty-five dollars had now expanded to nearly eight thousand dollars, and Pittsburg and Allegheny children were not only playing in a dozen schoolyards, but they were attending vacation schools, under expert instructors in manual training, cooking, sewing, art-crafts. Several recreation centers, all-the-year-round playgrounds, have been added since then. For Pittsburg has adopted the women's point of view in the matter of playgrounds. This year the city voted fifty thousand, three hundred and fifty dollars, and the Board of Education appropriated ten thousand dollars for the vacation schools.

In Detroit it was the Twentieth Century

Club that began the playground agitation. Mrs. Clara B. Arthur, some ten years ago, read a paper before the Department of Philanthropy and Reform, and following it the chairman of the meeting appointed a committee to consider the possibility of playgrounds for Detroit children. The committee visited the Board of Education, explained the need of playgrounds, and asked that the Board conduct one trial playground in a schoolyard, during the approaching vacation. The Board declined. The boards of education in most cities declined at first.

The club did not give up. It talked playgrounds to the other clubs, until all the organizations of women were interested. Within a year or two Detroit had a Council of Women, with a committee on playgrounds. The committee went to the Common Council this time and asked permission to erect a pavilion and establish a playground on a piece of city land. This was a great, bare, neglected spot, the site of an abandoned reservoir which had been of

no use to anybody for twenty years. The place had the advantage of being in a very forlorn neighborhood where many children swarmed.

The Common Council was mildly amused at the idea of putting public property to such an absurd, such an unheard-of use. A few of the men were indignant. One Germanic alderman exploded wrathfully: "Vot does vimmens know about poys' play — No!" And that settled it.

The committee went to the Board of Education once more, this time with better success. They received permission to open and conduct, during the long vacation, one playground in a large schoolyard. For two summers the women maintained that playground, holding their faith against the opposition of the janitors, the jeers of the newspapers, and the constant hostility of tax-payers, who protested against the "ruin of school property." After two years the Board of Education took over the work. The mayor became personally interested, and the Common Council gracefully surrendered. They

have plenty of playgrounds in Detroit now, the latest development being winter sports.

If the Germanic alderman who protested that "vimmins" did not know anything about boys' play was in office at the time, one wonders what his emotions were when the playgrounds committee first appeared before the Council and asked to have vacant lots flooded to give children skating ponds in winter. Of course the Council refused. Fire plugs were for water in case of fire, not for children's enjoyment. In fact there was a city ordinance forbidding the opening of a fire plug in winter, except to extinguish fire. It took two years of constant work on the part of the club women to remove that ordinance, but they did it, and the children of Detroit have their winter as well as their summer playgrounds.

In Philadelphia are fourteen splendid playgrounds and vacation schools, established in the beginning and maintained for many years by a civic club of women, the largest women's civic club in the country. The process of edu-

CAPTAIN BALL ON GIRL'S FIELD, WASHINGTON PARK, PITTSBURGH

Out of the persistent work of club women more than three hundred playgrounds for children have been established.

cating public opinion in their favor was slow, for it is difficult to make men see that the children of a modern city have different needs from the country or village children of a generation ago. Men remember their own boyhood, and scoff at the idea of organized and supervised play in a made playground. Women have no memories of the old swimming-hole. They simply see the conditions before them, and they instinctively know what must be done to meet them. The process of educating the others is slow, but this year in Philadelphia sixty public schoolyards were opened for public playgrounds, and the city appropriated five thousand dollars towards their maintenance. In a hundred cities East and West the women's clubs have been the original movers or have co-operated in the playground movement.

Out of this persistent work was born the Playground Association of America, an organization of men and women, which in the three years of its existence has established more than three hundred playgrounds for children.

In Massachusetts they have secured a referendum providing that all cities of over ten thousand inhabitants shall vote upon the question of providing adequate playgrounds. The act provides that every city and town in the Commonwealth which accepts the act shall after July 1, 1910, provide and maintain at least one public playground, and at least one other playground for every additional twenty thousand inhabitants. Something like twenty-five cities in the State have accepted the playgrounds act. It is a good beginning. The slogan of the movement, "The boy without a playground is the father of the man without a job," has swept over the continent.

This surely is a not inconsiderable achievement for so humble an instrument as women's clubs. It is true that in most communities they have forgotten that the women's clubs ever had anything to do with the movement. The Playgrounds Association has not forgotten, however. Its president, Luther Halsey Gulick, of New York, declares that even now the work

STORY HOUR AT VACATION PLAYGROUND, CASTELAR SCHOOL YARD,
LOS ANGELES, CAL.

would languish if it lost the co-operation of the women's clubs.

The scope of woman's work for civic betterment is wider than the interests that directly affect children. How much the women attempt, how difficult they find their task, how much opposition they encounter, and how certain their success in the end, is indicated in a modest report of the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Women's Civic Club. That report says in part:

"It is no longer necessary for us to continue, at our own cost, the practical experiment we began in street-cleaning, or to advocate the paving of a single principal street, as a test of the value of improved highways; nor is it necessary longer to strive for a pure water supply, a healthier sewerage system, or the construction of playgrounds. *This work is now being done by the City Council, by the Board of Public Works, and by the Park Commission.*"

Not that the Harrisburg Women's Civic

Club has gone out of business. It still keeps fairly busy with schoolhouse decoration, traveling libraries for factory employees, and inspecting the city dump.

In Birmingham, Alabama, the women's work has been recognized officially. The club women have formed "block" clubs, composed of the women living in each block, and the mayor has invested them with powers of supervision, control of street cleaning, and disposal of waste and garbage. They really act as overseers, and can remove lazy and incompetent employees.

Carlisle, Pennsylvania, has a ten-year-old Civic Club. The women have succeeded in getting objectionable billboards removed, public dumps removed from the town, in having all outside market stalls covered, and have secured ordinances forbidding spitting in public places, and against throwing litter into the streets.

Cranford, New Jersey, is one of a dozen small cities where the women's clubs hold

regular town house-cleanings. One large town in the Middle West adopted a vigorous method of educating public opinion in favor of spring and fall municipal house-cleaning. The club women got a photographer and went the rounds of streets and alleys and private backyards. Wherever bad or neglected conditions were found the club sent a note to the owner of the property asking him to co-operate with its members in cleaning up and beautifying the town. Where no attention was paid to the notes, the photographs were posted conspicuously in the club's public exhibit.

If the California women saved the big tree grove, the New Jersey women, by years of persistent work, saved the Palisades of the Hudson from destruction and inaugurated the movement to turn them into a public park. As for the Colorado club women, they saved the Cliff Dwellers' remains. You can no longer buy the pottery and other priceless relics of those prehistoric people in the curio-shops of Denver.

I am not attempting a catalogue; I am only giving a few crucial instances. The activities of women if they appeared only sporadically in Lake City, Dallas, San Francisco, and a dozen other cities, would not necessarily carry much weight. They would possess an interest purely local. But the club women of Lake City, Dallas, San Francisco, do not keep their interests local. Once a year they travel, hundreds of them, to a chosen city in the State, and there they hold a convention which lasts a week. And every second year the club women of Minnesota and Texas and California, and every other State in the Union, to say nothing of Alaska, Porto Rico, and the Canal Zone, thousands of them, journey to a chosen center, and there they hold a convention which lasts a week. And at these state and national conventions the club women compare their work and criticise it, and confer on public questions, and decide which movements they shall promote. They summon experts in all lines of work to lecture and

advise. Increasingly their work is national in its scope.

In round numbers, eight hundred thousand women are now enrolled in the clubs belonging to the General Federation of Women's Clubs, holding in common certain definite opinions, and working harmoniously towards certain definite social ends. Remember that these eight hundred thousand women are the educated, intelligent, socially powerful.

Long ago these eight hundred thousand women ceased to confine their studies to printed pages. They began to study life. Leaders developed, women of intellect and experience, who could foresee the immense power an organized womanhood might some time wield, and who had courage to direct the forces under them towards vital objects.

When, in 1904, Mrs. Sarah Platt Decker, of Denver, was elected President of the General Federation, she found a number of old-fashioned clubs still devoting themselves to Shakespeare and the classic writers. Mrs.

Decker, a voter, a full citizen, and a public worker of prominence in her State, simply laughed the musty study clubs out of existence.

"Ladies," she said to the delegates at the biennial meeting of 1904, "Dante is dead. He died several centuries ago, and a great many things have happened since his time. Let us drop the study of his 'Inferno' and proceed in earnest to contemplate our own social order."

Mostly they took her advice. A few clubs still devote themselves to the pursuit of pure culture, a few others exist with little motive beyond congenial association. The great majority of women's clubs are organized for social service. A glance at their national program shows the modernity, the liberal character of organized women's ideals. The General Federation has twelve committees, among them being those on Industrial Conditions of Women and Children, Civil Service Reform, Forestry, Pure Food and Public Health, Edu-

MRS. SARAH PLATT DECKER
Former President of General Federation of Women's Clubs.

cation, Civics, Legislation, Arts and Crafts, and Household Economics. Every state federation has adopted, in the main, the same departments; and the individual clubs follow as many lines of the work as their strength warrants.

The contribution of the women's clubs to education has been enormous. There is hardly a State in the Union the public schools of which have not been beautified, inside and outside; hardly a State where kindergartens and manual training, domestic science, medical inspection, stamp savings banks, or other improvements have not been introduced by the clubs. In almost every case the clubs have purchased the equipment and paid the salaries until the boards of education and the school superintendents have been convinced of the value of the innovations. In the South, where opportunities for the higher education of women are restricted, the clubs support dozens of scholarships in colleges and institutes. Many western State federations, notable among which is that

of Colorado, have strong committees on education which are active in the entire school system.

Thomas M. Balliett, Dean of Pedagogy in the New York University, paid a deserved tribute to the Massachusetts club women when he said:

"In Massachusetts the various women's organizations have, within the past few years, made a study of schools and school conditions throughout the State with a thoroughness that has never been attempted before."

Dean Balliett says of women's clubs in general that the most important reform movements in elementary education within the past twenty years have been due, in large measure, to the efforts of organized women. And he is right.

The women's clubs have founded more libraries than Mr. Carnegie. Early in the movement the women began the circulation among the clubs of traveling reference libraries. Soon this work was extended, but the object

of the libraries was diverted. Instead of collections of books on special subjects to assist the club women in their studies, the traveling cases were arranged in miscellaneous groups, and were sent to schools, to factories, to lonely farms, mining camps, lumber camps, and to isolated towns and villages.

Iowa now has more than twelve thousand volumes, half of them reference books, in circulation. Eighty-one permanent libraries have grown out of the traveling libraries in Iowa alone. After the traveling cases have been coming to a town for a year or two, people wake up and agree that they want a permanent place in which to read and study. Ohio has over a thousand libraries in circulation, having succeeded, a few years ago, in getting a substantial appropriation from the legislature to supplement their work. Western States — Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho — have supplied reading matter to ranches and mining camps for many years.

One interesting special library is circulated

in Massachusetts and Rhode Island in behalf of the anti-tuberculosis movement. Something like forty of the best books on health, and on the prevention and cure of tuberculosis, are included. This library, with a pretty complete tuberculosis exhibit, is sent around, and is shown by the local clubs of each town. Usually the women try to have a mass-meeting, at which local health problems are discussed. The Health Department of the General Federation is working to establish these health libraries and exhibits in every State.

Not only in the United States, but in every civilized country, have women associated themselves together with the object of reforming what seems to them social chaos. In practically every civilized country in the world to-day there exists a Council of Women, a central organization to which clubs and societies of women with all sorts of opinions and objects send delegates. In the United States the council is made up of the General Federation

of Women's Clubs, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, and innumerable smaller organizations, like the National Congress of Mothers, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. More than a million and a half American women are affiliated.

Four hundred and twenty-six women's organizations belong to the council in Great Britain. In Switzerland the council has sixty-four allied societies; in Austria it has fifty; in the Netherlands it has thirty-five. Seventy-five thousand women belong to the French council. In all, the International Council of Women, to which all the councils send delegates, represents more than eight million women, in countries as far apart as Australia, Argentine, Iceland, Persia, South Africa, and every country in Europe. The council, indeed, has no formal organization in Russia, because organizations of every kind are illegal in Russia. But Russian women attend every meeting of the International Council. Turkish women sent word to the last meeting that they

hoped soon to ask for admission. The President of the International Council of Women is the Countess of Aberdeen. Titled women in every European country belong to their councils. The Queen of Greece is president of the Greek council.

The object of this great world organization of women is to provide a common center for women of every country, race, creed, or party who are associating themselves together in altruistic work. Once every five years the International Council holds a great world congress of women.

What eight million of the most intelligent, the most thoughtful, the most altruistic women in the world believe, what they think the world needs, what they wish and desire for the good of humanity, must be of interest. It must count.

The International Council of Women discusses every important question presented, but makes no decision until the opinion of the delegates is practically unanimous. It com-

LADY ABERDEEN
President of the International Council of Women.

mits itself to no opinion, lends itself to no movement, until the movement has passed the controversial stage.

Those who cling to the old notion that women are perpetually at war with one another will learn with astonishment that eight million women of all nationalities, religions, and temperaments are agreed on at least four questions. In the course of its twenty years of existence the International Council has agreed to support four movements: Peace and arbitration, social purity, removing legal disabilities of women, woman suffrage.

The American reader will be inclined to cavil at the last-mentioned object. Woman suffrage, it will be claimed, has not passed the controversial stage, even with women themselves. That is true in the United States and in England. It is true, in a sense, in most countries of the world. But in European countries not *woman* suffrage, but *universal* suffrage is being struggled for.

I had this explained to me in Russia, in the

course of a conversation with Alexis Aladyn, the brilliant leader of the Social Democratic party. I said to him that I had been informed that the conservative reformers, as well as the radicals, included woman suffrage in their programs. Aladyn looked puzzled for a moment, and then he replied: "All parties desire universal suffrage. Naturally that includes women."

Finland at that time, 1906, had recently won its independence from the autocracy and was preparing for its first general election. Talking with one of the nineteen women returned to Parliament a few months later, I asked: "How did you Finnish women persuade the makers of the new constitution to give you the franchise?"

"Persuade?" she repeated; "we did not have to persuade them. There was simply no opposition. One of the demands made on the Russian Government was for universal suffrage."

The movement for universal suffrage, that

is the movement for free government, with the consent of the governed, is considered by the International Council of Women to have passed the controversial stage.

The whole club movement, as a matter of fact, is a part of the great democratic movement which is sweeping over the whole world. Individual clubs may be exclusive, even aristocratic in their tendencies, but the large organization is absolutely democratic. If the President of the International Council is an English peeress, one of the vice-presidents is the wife of a German music teacher, and one of the secretaries is a self-supporting woman. The General Federation in the United States is made up of women of various stations in life, from millionaires' wives to factory girls.

The democracy of women's organizations was shown at the meeting in London a year ago of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance, where delegates from twenty-one countries assembled. One of the great features of the meeting was a wonderful pageant of

women's trades and professions. An immense procession of women, bearing banners and emblems of their work, marched through streets lined with spectators to Albert Hall, where the entire orchestra of this largest auditorium in the world was reserved for them. A published account of the pageant, after describing the delegations of teachers, nurses, doctors, journalists, artists, authors, house workers, factory women, stenographers, and others well known here, says:

"Then the ranks opened, and down the long aisle came the chain makers who work at the forge, and the pit-brow women from the mines, — women whose faces have been blackened by smoke and coal dust until they can never be washed white. . . . To these women, the hardest workers in the land, were given the seats of honor, while behind them, gladly taking a subordinate place, were many women wearing gowns with scarlet and purple hoods, indicating their university degrees."

Every public movement — reform, philan-

thropic, sanitary, educational — now asks the co-operation of women's organizations. The United States Government asked the co-operation of the women's clubs to save the precarious Panama situation. At a moment when social discontent threatened literally to stop the building of the canal, the Department of Commerce and Labor employed Miss Helen Varick Boswell, of New York, to go to the Isthmus and organize the wives and daughters of Government employees into clubs. The Department knew that the clubs, once organized, would do the rest. Nor was it disappointed.

The Government asks the co-operation of women in its latest work of conserving natural resources. At the biennial of the Federation of Women's Clubs in 1906 Mr. Enos Mills delivered an address on forestry, a movement which was beginning to engage the attention of the clubs. Within an hour after he left the platform Mr. Mills had been engaged by a dozen state presidents to lecture to clubs and federations. As soon as it reached the

Government that the women's clubs were paying fifty dollars a lecture to learn about forestry work, the Government arranged that the clubs should have the best authorities in the nation to lecture on forestry free of all expense.

But the Government is not alone in recognizing the power of women's organizations. If the Government approves their interest in public questions, vested interests are beginning to fear it. The president of the Manufacturers' Association, in his inaugural address, told his colleagues that their wives and daughters invited some very dangerous and revolutionary speakers to address their clubs. He warned them that the women were becoming too friendly toward reforms that the association frowned upon.

This is indeed true, and women display, in their new-found enthusiasm, a singularly obstinate spirit. All the legislatures south of the Mason and Dixon Line cannot make the Southern women believe that Southern pros-

perity is dependent upon young children laboring in mills. The women go on working for child labor and compulsory education laws, unconvinced by the arguments of the mill owners and the votes of the legislators. The highest court in the State of New York was powerless to persuade New York club women that the United States Constitution stands in the way of a law prohibiting the night work of women. The Court of Appeals declared the law unconstitutional, and many women at present are toiling at night. But the club women immediately began fighting for a new law.

The women of every State in the Union are able to work harmoniously together because they are unhampered with traditions of what the founders of the Republic intended, — the sacredness of state rights, or the protective paternalism of Wall Street. The gloriously illogical sincerity of women is concerned only about the thing itself.

I have left for future consideration women

who having definite social theories have organized themselves for definite objects. This chapter has purposely been confined to the activities of average women — good wives and mothers, the eight hundred thousand American women whose collective opinion is expressed through the General Federation of Women's Clubs. For the most part they are mature in years, these club women. Their children are grown. Some are in college and some are married. I have heard more than one presiding officer at a State Federation meeting proudly announce from the platform that she had become a grandmother since the last convention.

The present president of the General Federation, Mrs. Philip N. Moore of St. Louis, Missouri, is a graduate of Vassar College, and served for a time as president of the National Society of Collegiate Alumnæ. There are not wanting in the club movement many women who have taken college and university honors. Club women taken the country over, however,

are not college products. If they had been, the club movement might have taken on a more cultural and a less practical form. As it was, the women formed their groups with the direct object of educating themselves and, being practical women used to work, they readily turned their new knowledge to practical ends. As quickly as they found out, through education, what their local communities needed they were filled with a generous desire to supply those needs. In reality they simply learned from books and study how to apply their housekeeping lore to municipal government and the public school system. Nine-tenths of the work they have undertaken relates to children, the school, and the home. Some of it seemed radical in the beginning, but none of it has failed, in the long run, to win the warmest approval of the people.

The eight million women who form the International Council of Women, and express the collective opinion of women the world over, are not exceptional types, although they

may possess exceptional intelligence. They are merely good citizens, wives, and mothers. Their program contains nothing especially radical. And yet, what a revolution would the world witness were that program carried out? Peace and arbitration; social purity; public health; woman suffrage; removal of all legal disabilities of women. This last-named object is perhaps more revolutionary in its character than the others, because its fulfillment will disturb the basic theories on which the nations have established their different forms of government.

CHAPTER III

EUROPEAN WOMEN AND THE SALIC LAW

Several years ago a woman of wealth and social prominence in Kentucky, after pondering some time on the inferior position of women in the United States, wrote a book. In this volume the United States was compared most unfavorably with the countries of Europe, where the dignity and importance of women received some measure of recognition. Women, this author protested, enjoy a larger measure of political power in England than in America. In England and throughout Europe their social power is greater. If a man becomes lord mayor of an English city his wife becomes lady mayoress, and she shares all her husband's official honors. On the Continent women are often made honorary colonels of regiments, and take part with the men in

military reviews. Women frequently hold high offices at court, acting as chamberlains, constables, and the like. The writer closed her last chapter with the announcement that she meant henceforth to make her home in England, where women had more than once occupied the throne as absolute monarch and constitutional ruler.

It is true that in some particulars American women do seem to be at a disadvantage with European women. With what looks like a higher regard for women's intelligence, England has bestowed upon them every measure of suffrage except the Parliamentary franchise. In England, throughout the Middle Ages, and even down to the present century, women held the office of sheriff of the county, clerk of the crown, high constable, chamberlain, and even champion at a coronation, — the champion being a picturesque figure who rides into the hall and flings his glove to the nobles, in defense of the king's crown.

In the royal pageants of European history

behold the powerful figures of Maria Theresa, Catherine the Great, Mary Tudor, Elizabeth, Mary of Scotland, Christina of Sweden, rulers in fact as well as in name; to say nothing of the long line of women regents in whose hands the state intrusted its affairs, during the minority of its kings. In the United States a woman candidate for mayor of a small town would be considered a joke.

These and other inconsistencies have puzzled many ardent upholders of American chivalry. In order to understand the position of women in the United States it is necessary to make a brief survey of the laws under which European women are governed, and the social theory on which their apparent advantages are based.

In the first place, the statement that in European countries a woman may succeed to the throne must be qualified. In three countries only, England, Spain, and Portugal, are women counted in the line of succession on terms approaching equality with men. In these three countries when a monarch dies

leaving no sons his eldest daughter becomes the sovereign. If the ruling monarch die, leaving no children at all, the oldest daughter — failing sons — of the man who was in his lifetime in direct line of succession is given preference to male heirs more remote. Thus Queen Victoria succeeded William IV, she being the only child of the late king's deceased brother and heir, the Duke of Kent.

Similar laws govern the succession in Portugal and Spain, although dispute on this point has more than once caused civil war in Spain.

In Holland, Greece, Russia, Austria, and a few German states a woman may succeed to the throne, provided every single male heir to the crown is dead. Queen Wilhelmina became sovereign in Holland only because the House of Orange was extinct in the male line, and Holland lost, on account of the accession of Wilhelmina, the rich and important Duchy of Luxemburg.

Luxemburg, in common with the rest of Europe, except the countries described, lives

under what is known as the Salic Law, according to which a woman may not, in any circumstances, become sovereign.

A word about this Salic Law is necessary, because the tradition of it permeates the whole atmosphere in which the women of Europe live, move, and have their legal and social being.

The Salic Law was the code of a barbarous people, so far extinct and forgotten that it is uncertain just what territory in ancient Gaul they occupied at the time the code was formulated. Later the Salian Franks, as the tribe was designated, built on the left bank of the Seine rude fortresses and a collection of wattled huts which became the ancestor of the present-day city of Paris.

The Salic Law was a complete code. It governed all matters, civil and military. It prescribed rules of war; it fixed the salaries of officials; it designated the exact amount of blood money the family of a slain man might collect from the family of the slayer; it regu-

lated conditions under which individuals might travel from one village to another; it governed matters of property transfer and inheritance.

The Salian Franks are dust; their might has perished, their annals are forgotten, their cities are leveled, their mightiest kings sleep in unmarked graves, their code has passed out of existence, almost indeed out of the memory of man, — all except one paragraph of one division of one law. The law related to inheritance of property; the special division distinguished between real and personal property, and the paragraph ruled that a woman might inherit movable property, but that she might not inherit land.

There was not a syllable in the law relating to the inheritance of a throne. Nevertheless, centuries after the last Salian king was laid in his barbarous grave a French prince successfully contested with an English prince the crown of France, his claim resting on that obscure paragraph in the Salic code. The Hundred Years' War was fought on this issue,

and the final outcome of the war established the Salic Law permanently in France, and with more or less rigor in most of the European states.

At the time of the French Revolution, when the "Rights of Man" were being declared with so much fervor and enthusiasm, when the old laws were being revised in favor of greater freedom of the individual, the "Rights of Woman" were actually revised downward. Up to this time the application of the Salic Law was based on tradition and precedent. Now a special statute was enacted forever barring women from the sovereignty of France. "Founded on the pride of the French, who could not bear to be ruled by their own women folk," as the records are careful to state.

The interpretation of the Salic Law did more, a great deal more, than exclude women from the throne. It established the principle of the inherent inferiority of women. The system of laws erected on that principle were necessarily deeply tinged with contempt for

women, and with fear lest their influence in any way might affect the conduct of state affairs. That explains why, at the present time, although in most European countries women are allowed to practice medicine, they are not allowed to practice law. Medicine may be as learned a profession, but it affects only human beings. The law, on the other hand, affects the state. A woman advocate, you can readily imagine, might so influence a court of justice that the laws of the land might suffer feminization. From the European point of view this would be most undesirable.

The apparently superior rights possessed by English women were also bestowed upon them by a vanished system of laws. They have descended from Feudalism, in which social order the *person* did not exist. The social order consisted of *property* alone, and the claims of property, that is to say, land, were paramount over the claims of the individual. Those historic women sheriffs of counties, clerks of crown, chamberlains, and high constables held

their high offices because the offices were hereditary property in certain titled families, and they had to belong to the entail, even when a woman was in possession. The offices were purely titular. No English woman ever acted as high constable. No English woman ever attended a coronation as king's champion. The rights and duties of these offices were delegated to a male relative. Every once in a while, during the Middle Ages, some strong-minded lady of title demanded the right to administer her office in person, but she was always sternly put down by a rebuking House of Lords, sometimes even by the king's majesty himself.

In the same way the voting powers of the women of England are a result of hereditary privilege. Local affairs in England, until a very recent period, were administered through the parish, and the only persons qualified to vote were the property owners of the parish. It was really property interests and not people who voted. Those women who owned prop-

erty, or who were administering property for their minor children, were entitled to vote, to serve on boards of guardians, and to dispense the Poor Laws. Out of their right of parish vote has grown their right of municipal franchise. It carries with it a property qualification, and the proposed Parliamentary franchise, for which the women of England are making such a magnificent fight, will also have a property qualification.

The real position, legal and social, which women in England and continental Europe have for centuries occupied, may be gauged from an examination of the feminist movement in a very enlightened country, say Germany. The laws of Germany were founded on the Corpus Juris of the Romans, a stern code which relegates women to the position of chattels. And chattels they have been in Germany, until very recent years, when through the intelligent persistence of strong women the chains have somewhat been loosened.

A generation ago, in 1865, to be exact, a

group of women in Leipzig formed an association which they called the Allgemeinen Deutschen Frauenbund, which may be Anglicized into General Association of German Women. The stated objects of the association give a pretty clear idea of the position of women at that time. The women demanded as their rights, Education, the Right to Work, Free Choice of Profession. Nothing more, but these three demands were so revolutionary that all masculine Germany, and most of feminine Germany, uttered horrified protests. Needless to say nothing came of the women's demand.

After the Franco-Prussian War the center of the women's revolt naturally moved to the capital of the new empire, Berlin. From that city, during the years that followed, so much feminine unrest was radiated that in 1887 the German Woman Suffrage Association was formed, with the demand for absolute equality with men. Two remarkable women, Minna Cauer and Anita Augsberg, the latter unmar-

ried and a doctor of laws, were the moving spirits in the first woman suffrage agitation, which has since extended throughout the empire until there is hardly a small town without its suffrage club.

Now the woman suffragist in Germany differs from the American suffragist in that she is always a member of a political party. She is a silent member to be sure, but she adheres to her party, because, through tradition or conviction, she believes in its policies. Usually the suffragist is a member of the Social Democratic Party, allied to the International Socialist Party. She is a suffragist because she is a Socialist, because woman suffrage, and, indeed, the full equalization of the laws governing men and women are a part of the Socialist platform in every country in the world. The woman member of the Social Democratic party is not working primarily for woman suffrage. She is working for a complete overturning of the present economic system, and she advocates *universal adult suffrage* as a means of bring-

ing about the social and economic changes demanded by the Socialists.

These German Socialist women are often very advanced spirits, who hold university degrees, who have entered the professions, and are generally emancipated from strictly conventional lives. Others, in large numbers, belong to the intellectual proletarian classes. Their American prototypes are to be found in the Women's Trade Union League, described in a later chapter.

The other German suffragists are members of the radical, the moderate (we should say conservative), and the clerical parties. These women are middle class, average, intelligent wives and mothers. They correspond fairly well with the women of the General Federation of Clubs in the United States, and like the American club women they are affiliated with the International Council of Women. Locally they are working for the social reforms demanded by the first American suffrage convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in

1848. They are demanding the higher education, married women's property rights, free speech, and the right to choose a trade or profession. They are demanding other rights, from lack of which the American woman never suffered. The right to attend a political meeting was until recently denied to German women. Although they take a far keener and more intelligent interest in national and local politics than American women as a rule have ever taken, their presence at political meetings has but yesterday been sanctioned.

The civil responsibility of the father and mother in many European countries is barbarously unequal. If a marriage exists between the parents the father is the only parent recognized. He is sole guardian and authority. When divorce dissolves a marriage the rights of the father are generally paramount, even when he is the party accused.

On the other hand, if no marriage exists between the parents, if the child is what is called illegitimate, the mother is alone responsible for

its maintenance. Not only is the father free from all responsibility, his status as a father is denied by law. Inquiry into the paternity of the child is in some countries forbidden. The unhappy mother may have documentary proof that she was betrayed under promise of marriage, but she is not allowed to produce her proof.

Under the French Code, the substance of which governs all Europe, it is distinctly a principle that the woman's honor is and ought to be of less value than a man's honor. Napoleon personally insisted on this principle, and more than once emphasized his belief that no importance should be attached to men's share in illegitimacy.

These and other degrading laws the European progressive women are trying to remove from the Codes. They have their origin in the belief in " The imprudence, the frailty, and the imbecility " of women, to quote from this Code Napoleon.

Whatever women's legal disabilities in the

United States, their laws were never based on the principle that women were imprudent, frail, or imbecile. They placed women at a distinct disadvantage, it is true, but it was the disadvantage of the minor child and not of the inferior, the chattel, the property of man, as in Europe.

Laws in the United States were founded on the assumption that women stood in perpetual need of protection. The law makers carried this to the absurd extent of assuming that protection was all the right a woman needed or all she ought to claim. They even pretended that when a woman entered the complete protection of the married state she no longer stood in need of an identity apart from her husband. The working out of this theory in a democracy was far from ideal, as we shall see.

CHAPTER IV

AMERICAN WOMEN AND THE COMMON LAW

A little girl sat in a corner of her father's law library watching, with wide, serious eyes, a scene the like of which was common enough a generation or two ago. The weeping old woman told a halting story of a dissipated son, a shrewish daughter-in-law, and a state of servitude on her own part, — a story pitifully sordid in its details. The farm had come to her from her father's estate. For forty years she had toiled side by side with her husband, getting a simple, but comfortable, living from the soil. Then the husband died. Under the will the son inherited the farm, and everything on it, — house, furniture, barns, cattle, tools. Even the money in the bank was his. A clause in the will provided that the son should give his mother a home during her lifetime.

So here she was, after a life of hard work and loving service, shorn of everything; a pauper, an unpaid servant in the house of another woman, — her son's wife. Was it true that the law took her home away from her, — the farm that descended to her from her father, the house she had lived in since childhood? Could nothing, *nothing* be done?

The aged judge shook his head, sadly. "You see, Mrs. Grant," he explained, "the farm has never really been yours since your marriage, for then it became by law your husband's property, precisely as if he had bought it. He had a right to leave it to whom he would. No doubt he did what he thought was for your good. I wish I could help you, but I cannot. The law is inexorable in these matters."

After the forlorn old woman had gone the lawyer's child went and stood by her father's chair. "Why could n't you help her?" she asked. "Why do you let them take her home away from her?"

Judge Cady opened the sheep-bound book at his elbow and showed the little girl a paragraph. Turning the pages, he pointed out others for her to read. Spelling through the ponderous legal phraseology the little girl learned that a married woman had no existence, in the eyes of the law, apart from her husband. She could own no property; she could neither buy nor sell; she could not receive a gift, even from her own husband. She was, in fact, her husband's chattel. If he beat her she had no means of punishing, or even restraining him, unless, indeed, she could prove that her life was endangered. If she ran away from him the law forced her to return.

Paragraph after paragraph the child read through, and, unseen by her father, marked faintly with a pencil. So far as she was aware, father, and father's library of sheep-bound books, were the beginning and the end of the law, and to her mind the way to get rid of measures which took women's homes away from them was perfectly simple. That night

when the house was quiet she stole downstairs, scissors in hand, determined *to cut every one of those laws out of the book.*

The young reformer was restrained, but only temporarily. As Elizabeth Cady Stanton she lived to do her part toward revising many of the laws under which women, in her day, suffered, and her successors, the organized women of the United States, are busy with their scissors, revising the rest.

Not alone in Russia, Germany, France, and England do the laws governing men and women need equalizing. In America, paradise of women, the generally accepted theory that women have "all the rights they want" does not stand the test of impartial examination.

In America some women have all the rights they want. Your wife and the wives of the men you associate with every day usually have all the rights they want, sometimes a few that they do not need at all. Is the house yours? The furniture yours? The motor yours? The income yours? Are the children yours? If

you are the average fond American husband, you will return the proud answer: "No, indeed, they are *ours*."

This is quite as it should be, assuming that all wives are as tenderly cherished, and as well protected as the women who live on your block. For a whole big army of women there are often serious disadvantages connected with that word "ours."

In Boston there lived a family of McEwans, — a man, his wife, and several half-grown children. McEwan was not a very steady man. He drank sometimes, and his earning capacity was uncertain. Mrs. McEwan was an energetic, capable, intelligent woman, tolerant of her husband's failings, ambitious for her children. She took a large house, furnished it on the installment plan, and filled it with boarders. The boarders gave the family an income larger than they had ever possessed before, and McEwan's contributions fell off. He became an unpaying guest himself. All his earnings, he explained, were going into investments. The

man was, in fact, speculating in mining stocks.

One day McEwan came home with a face of despair. His creditors, he told his wife, had descended on him, seized his business, and threatened to take possession of the boarding house.

"But it is mine," protested the woman, with spirit. "I bought every bit of furniture with the money my boarders paid me. Nobody can touch my property or my earnings to satisfy a claim on you. I am not liable for your debts."

One of the boarders was a lawyer, and to him that night she took the case. "A woman's earnings are her own in Massachusetts, are they not?" she demanded.

"You are what the law calls a free trader," replied the lawyer, "and whatever you earn is yours, certainly. That is — of course you are recorded at the city clerk's office?"

"Why no. Why should I be?"

"The law requires it. Otherwise this property, and even the money your boarders pay

you, are liable to attachment for your husband's debts. Unless you make a specific declaration that you are in business for yourself, the law assumes that the business is your husband's."

"If I went to work for a salary, should I have to be recorded in order to keep my own money?" Mrs. McEwan was growing angry.

"No," replied the lawyer, "not if you were careful to keep your income and your husband's absolutely separate. If you both paid installments on a piano the piano would be your husband's, not yours. If you bought a house together, the house could be seized for his debts. Everything you buy with your money is yours. Everything you buy with money he gives you is his. Everything you buy together is his. You could not protect such property from your husband's creditors, or from his heirs."

Mrs. McEwan's case is mild, her wrongs faint beside those of a woman in Los Angeles, California. Her husband was a doctor, and

she had been, before her marriage, a trained nurse. The young woman had saved several hundred dollars, and she put the money into a first payment on a pretty little cottage. During the first two or three years of the marriage the doctor's wife, from time to time, attended cases of illness, usually contributing her earnings toward the payment for the house or into furniture for the house. In all she paid about a thousand dollars, or something like one-third of the cost of the house. Then children came, and her earning days were over.

Unfortunately the domestic affairs of this household became disturbed. The doctor contracted a drug habit. He became irregular in his conduct and ended by running away with a dissolute woman. After he had gone his wife found that the house she lived in, and which she had helped to buy, had been sold, without her knowledge or consent. The transaction was perfectly legal. Community property, that is, property held jointly by husband and wife, is absolutely controlled by the hus-

band in California. In that State community property may even be given away, without the wife's knowledge or consent.

It happened not many years ago that one of the most powerful millionaires in California, in a moment of generosity, conveyed to one of his sons a very valuable property. Some time afterwards the father and son quarreled, and the father attempted to get back his property. His plea in court was that his wife's consent to the transaction had never been sought; but the court ruled that since the property was owned in community, the wife's consent did not have to be obtained.

This particular woman happened to be rich enough to stand the experience of having a large slice of property given away without her knowledge, but the same law would have applied to the case of a woman who could not afford it at all.

It is in the case of women wage earners that these laws bear the peculiar asperity. Down in the cotton-mill districts of the South are

scores of men who never, from one year to the next, do a stroke of work. They are supposed to be "weakly." Their wives and children work eleven hours a day (or night) and every pay day the men go to the mills and collect their wages. The money belongs to them under the law. Even if the women had the spirit to protest, the protest would be useless. The right of a man to collect and to spend his wife's earnings is protected in many States in the chivalric South. In Texas, for example, a husband is entitled to his wife's earnings even *though he has deserted her.*

I do not know that this occurs very often in Texas. Probably not, unless among low-class Negroes. In all likelihood if a Texas woman should appeal to her employer, and tell him that her husband had abandoned her, he would refuse to give the man her wages. Should the husband be in a position to invoke the law, he could claim his wife's earnings, nevertheless.

The Kentucky lady who chose England for her future home, had she known it, selected the

country to which most American women owe their legal disabilities. American law, except in Louisiana and Florida, is founded on English common law, and English common law was developed at a period when men were of much greater importance in the state than women. The state was a military organization, and every man was a fighter, a king's defender. Women were valuable only because defenders of kings had to have mothers.

English common law provided that every married woman must be supported in as much comfort as her husband's estate warranted. The mothers of the nation must be fed, clothed, and sheltered. What more could they possibly ask? In return for permanent board and clothes, the woman was required to give her husband all of her property, real and personal. What use had she for property? Did she need it to support herself? In case of war and pillage could she defend it?

Husband and wife were one — and that one was the man. He was so much the one that the

woman had literally no existence in the eyes of the law. She not only did not possess any property; she could possess none. Her husband could not give her any, because there could be no contract between a married pair. A contract implies at least two people, and husband and wife were one. The husband could, if he chose, establish a trusteeship, and thus give his wife the free use of her own. But you can easily imagine that he did not very often do it.

A man could, also, devise property to his wife by will. Often this was done, but too often the sons were made heirs, and the wife was left to what tender mercies they owned. If a man died intestate the wife merely shared with other heirs. She had no preference.

Under the old English common law, moreover, not only the property, but also the services of a married woman belonged to her husband. If he chose to rent out her services, or if she offered to work outside the home, it followed logically that her wages belonged to him. What use had she for wages?

On the other hand, every man was held responsible for the support of his wife. He was responsible for her debts, as long as they were the necessities of life. He was also responsible for her conduct. Being propertyless, she could not be held to account for wrongs committed. If she stole, or destroyed property, or injured the person of another, if she committed any kind of a misdemeanor in the presence of her husband, and that also meant if he were in her neighborhood at the time, the law held him responsible. He should have restrained her.

This was supposed to be a decided advantage to the woman. Whenever a rebellious woman or group of women voiced their objection to the system which robbed them of every shred of independence they were always reminded that the system at the same time relieved them of every shred of responsibility, even, to an extent, of moral responsibility. "So great a favorite," comments Blackstone, "is the female sex under the laws of England."

You may well imagine that, in these circum-

stances, husbands were interested that their wives should be very good. The law supported them by permitting "moderate correction." A married woman might be kept in what Blackstone calls "reasonable restraint" by her husband. But only with a stick no larger than his thumb.

The husbandly stick was never imported into the United States. Even the dour Puritans forbade its use. The very first modification of the English common law, in its application to American women, was made in 1650, when the General Court of Massachusetts Bay Colony decreed that a husband beating his wife, or, for that matter, a wife beating her husband, should be fined ten pounds, or endure a public whipping.

The Pilgrim Fathers and the other early colonists in America brought with them the system of English common law under which they and their ancestors had for centuries been governed. From time to time, as conditions made them necessary, new laws were enacted and put

into force. In all cases not specifically covered by these new laws, the old English common law was applied. It did not occur to any one that women would ever need special laws. The Pilgrim Fathers and their successors, the Puritans, simply assumed that here, as in the England they had left behind, woman's place was in the home, where she was protected, supported, and controlled.

But in the new world woman's place in the home assumed an importance much greater than it had formerly possessed. Labor was scarce, manufacturing and trading were undeveloped. Woman's special activities were urgently needed. Woman's hands helped to raise the roof-tree, her skill and industry, to a very large extent, furnished the house. She spun and wove, cured meat, dried corn, tanned skins, made shoes, dipped candles, and was, in a word, almost the only manufacturer in the country. But this did not raise her from her position as an inferior. Woman owned neither her tools nor her raw materials. These her

husband provided. In consequence, husband and wife being one, that one, in America, as in England, was the husband.

This explanation is necessary in order to understand why the legal position of most American women to-day is that of inferiors, or, at best, of minor children.

It is necessary also, in order to understand why, except in matters of law, American women are treated with such extraordinary consideration and indulgence. As long as pioneer conditions lasted women were valuable because of the need of their labor, their special activities. Also, for a very long period, women were scarce, and they were highly prized not alone for their labor, but because their society was so desirable. In other words, pioneer conditions gave woman a better standing in the new world than she had in the old, and she was treated with an altogether new consideration and regard.

In England no one thought very badly of a man who was moderately abusive of his wife.

In America, violence against women was, from the first, an unbearable idea. Laws protecting maid servants, dependent women, and, as we have seen, even wives, were very early enacted in New England.

But although woman was more dearly prized in the new country than in the old, no new legislation was made for her benefit. Her legal status, or rather her absence of legal status apart from her husband, remained exactly as it had been under the English common law.

No legislature in the United States has deliberately made laws placing women at a disadvantage with men. Whatever laws are unfair and oppressive to women have just happened — just grown up like weeds out of neglected soil.

Let me illustrate. No lawmaker in New Mexico ever introduced a bill into the legislature making men liable for their wives' torts or petty misdemeanors. Yet in New Mexico, at this very minute, a wife is so completely her husband's property that he is responsible for

her behavior. If she should rob her neighbor's clothesline, or wreck a chicken yard, her unfortunate husband would have to stand trial. Simply because in New Mexico married women are still living under laws that were evolved in another civilization, long before New Mexico was dreamed of as a State.

Nowhere else in the United States are women allowed to shelter their weak moral natures behind the stern morality of their husbands, but in more than one State the husband's responsibility for his wife's acts is assumed. In Massachusetts, for one State, if a woman owned a saloon and sold beer on Sunday, she would be liable to arrest, and so also would her husband, provided he were in the house when the beer was sold. Both would probably be fined. Simply because it was once the law that a married woman had no separate existence apart from her husband, this absurd law, or others as absurd, remain on the statute books of almost every State in the Union.

The ascent of woman, which began with the

abolishment of corporeal punishment of wives, proceeded very slowly. Most American women married, and most American wives were kindly treated. At least public opinion demanded that they be treated with kindness. Long before any other modification of her legal status was gained, a woman subjected to cruelty at the hands of her lawful spouse was at liberty to seek police protection.

The reason why police protection was so seldom sought is plain enough. Imagine a woman complaining of a husband who would be certain to beat her again for revenge, and to whom she was bound irrevocably by laws stronger even than the laws on the statute books. Remember that the only right she had was the right to be supported, and if she left her husband's house she left her only means of living. She could hardly support herself, for few avenues of industry were open to women. She was literally a pauper, and when there is nowhere else to lay his head, even the most miserable pauper thinks twice before he

runs away from the poorhouse. Besides, the woman who left her husband had to give up her children. They too were the husband's property.

There were some women who hesitated before they consented to pauperize themselves by marrying. Widows were especially wary, if old stories are to be trusted. A story is told in the New York University Law School of a woman in Connecticut who took with her, as a part of her wedding outfit, a very handsome mahogany bureau, bequeathed her by her grandfather. After a few years of marriage the husband suddenly died, leaving no will. The home and all it contained were sold at auction. The widow was permitted to buy certain objects of furniture, and among them was her cherished bureau. Where the poor woman found the money with which to buy is not revealed. In time this woman married again, and again her husband died without a will. Again there was an auction, and again the widow purchased her beloved heirloom. It

seems possible that this time she had saved money in anticipation of the necessity.

A little later, for she was still young and attractive, a suitor appeared, offering his heart and "all his worldly goods." "No, I thank you," replied the sorely tried creature, "I prefer to keep my bureau."

The first struggle made by women in their own behalf was against this condition of marital slavery. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Lydia Maria Child, and others of that brave band of rebellious women, were active for years, addressing legislative committees in New York and Massachusetts, circulating petitions, writing to newspapers, agitating everywhere in favor of married women's property rights. Finally it began to dawn on the minds of men that there might be a certain public advantage, as well as private justice, attaching to separate ownership by married women of their own property.

In 1839 the Massachusetts State Legislature passed a cautious measure giving married

women qualified property rights. It was not until 1848 that a really effective Married Women's Property Law was secured, by action of the New York State Assembly. The law served as a model in many of the new Western States just then framing their laws.

These New York legislators, and the Western legislators who first granted property rights to married women, were actuated less by a sense of justice towards women than by enlightened selfishness. The effect of so much freedom on women themselves was a matter for grave conjecture. It was not suggested by any of the American debaters, as it was later on the floors of the English Parliament, that women, if they controlled their own property, would undoubtedly squander it on men whom they preferred to their husbands. But it was prophesied that women once in possession of money would desert their husbands by regiments, — which speaks none too flatteringly of the husbands of that day.

Men of property stood for the Married

Women's Property Act, because they perceived plainly that their own wealth, devised to daughters who could not control it, might easily be gambled away, or wasted through improvidence, or diverted to the use of strangers. In other words, they knew that their property, when daughters inherited it, became the property of their sons-in-law. They had no guarantee that their own grandchildren would ever have the use of it, unless it was controlled by their mothers.

It was the women's clubs and women's organizations in America, as it was the Women's Councils in Europe, that actively began the agitation against women's legal disabilities. The National Woman Suffrage Association, oldest of all women's organizations in the United States, has been calling attention to the unequal laws, and demanding their abolishment, for two generations.

Practically all of the state federations of women's clubs have legislative committees, and it is usually the business of these committees

to codify the laws of their respective States which apply directly to women. In some cases a woman lawyer is made chairman, and the work is done under her direction. Sometimes, as in Texas, a well known and friendly man lawyer is retained for the task. Almost invariably the report of the legislative committee contains disagreeable surprises. American women have been so accustomed to their privileges that they have taken their rights for granted, and are usually astonished when they find how limited their rights actually are.

There are some States in the Union where women are on terms of something like equality with men. There is one State to which all intelligent women look with a sort of envious, admiring, questioning curiosity, Colorado, which is literally the woman's paradise. In Colorado it would be difficult to find even the smallest inequality between men and women. They vote on equal terms, and if any woman deserves to go to the legislature, and succeeds in convincing a large enough public of the fact,

nothing stands in the way of her election. One woman, Mrs. Alma Lafferty, is a member of the present legislature, and she has had several predecessors.

But Colorado women have a larger influence still in legislative matters. To guard their interests they have a Legislative Committee of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, consisting of thirty to forty carefully chosen women.

This committee has permanent headquarters in Denver during every session of the legislature, and every bill which directly affects women and children, before reaching the floor of either house, is submitted for approval to the committee.

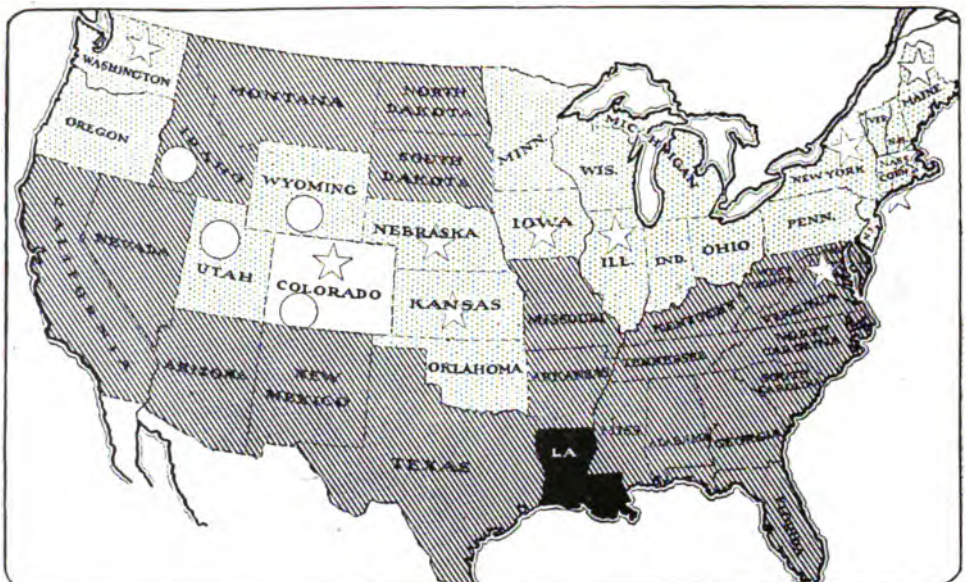
Miss Jane Addams has declared, and Miss Addams is pretty good authority, that the laws governing women and children in Colorado are superior to those of any other State. Women receive equal pay for equal work in Colorado. They are permitted to hold any office. They are co-guardians of their chil-

dren, and the education of children has been placed almost entirely in the hands of women. This does not mean that Colorado has weakened its schools by barring men from the teaching profession. It means that women are superintendents of schools in many counties, and that one woman was, for more than ten years, State superintendent of schools.

Contrast Colorado with Louisiana, possibly the last State in the Union a well-informed woman would choose for a residence. The laws of Louisiana were based, not on the English common law, but on the Code Napoleon, which regards women merely as a working, breeding, domestic animal.

"There is one thing that is not *French*," thundered the great Napoleon, closing a conference on his famous code, "and that is that a woman can do as she pleases."

The framers of Louisiana's laws were particular to guard against too great a freedom of action on the part of its women. Toward the end of Mrs. Jefferson Davis's life she



A "Women's Rights" Map of the United States

White states are those in which women have equal legal rights with men. Dotted states are those in which inequalities are slight. In states shaded with lines women have no control, or very slight control, of property or earnings. In black states women have few rights. Circles indicate states where women vote on equal terms with men. Stars indicate states where women are co-guardians of their children. The star between Virginia and Maryland represents the District of Columbia

added a codicil to her will, giving to a certain chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy a number of very valuable relics of her husband, and of the short-lived Confederate Government. Her action was made public, and it was then revealed that two women had signed the document as witnesses. Instantly Mrs. Davis's attention was called to the fact that in Louisiana, where she was then living, no woman may witness a document. Women's signatures are worthless.

In Louisiana your disabilities actually begin when you become an engaged girl. From that happy moment on you are under the dominance of a man. Your wedding presents are not yours, but his. If you felt like giving a duplicate pickle-fork to your mother, you could not legally do so, and after you were married, if your husband wanted that pickle-fork, he could get it. Your clothing, your dowry, become community property as soon as the marriage ceremony is over, and community property in Louisiana is controlled absolutely

by the husband. Every dollar a woman earns there is at her husband's disposal. Without her husband's consent a Louisiana woman may not go into a court of law, even though she may be in business for herself and the action sought is in defense of her business.

Nor does the Louisiana woman fare any better as a mother. Then, in fact, her position is nothing short of humiliating. During her husband's lifetime he is sole guardian of their children. At his death she may become their guardian, but if she marries a second time — and the law permits her to remarry, provided she waits ten months — she retains her children only by the formal consent of her first husband's family. If they dislike her, or disapprove of her second marriage, they may demand the custody of the children.

It is true that many of these absurd laws in Louisiana are not now often enforced. It is also true that in Louisiana and other states few men are so unjust to their wives as to take advantage of unequal property rights.

Laws always lag behind the sense of justice which lives in man. But the point is that unequal laws still remain on our statute books, and they may be, and sometimes are, enforced.

Between these two extremes, Colorado and Louisiana, women have the other forty-six States to choose. None of them offers perfect equality. Even in Idaho, Wyoming, and Utah — the three States besides Colorado where women vote — women are in such a minority that their votes are powerless to remove all their disabilities. Very rarely have club women even so much felicity as the New York State Federation, whose legislative chairman, Miss Emilie Bullowa, reported that she was unable to find a single unimportant inequality in the New York laws governing the property rights of women.

In most of the older States the property rights of married women are now fairly guaranteed, but the proud boast that in America no woman is the slave of her husband will have to be modified when it is known that in

at least seventeen States these rights are still denied.

The husband absolutely controls his wife's property and her earnings in Texas, Tennessee, Louisiana, California, Arizona, North Dakota, and Idaho. He has virtual control — that is to say, the wife's rights are merely provisional — in Alabama, New Mexico, and Missouri.

Women to control their own business property must be registered as traders on their own account in these States: Georgia, Montana, Nevada, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Oregon, and Virginia.

Nor are women everywhere permitted to work on equal terms with men.

There is a current belief, often expressed, that in the United States every avenue of industry is open to women on equal terms with men. This is not quite true. In some States a married woman may not engage in any business without permission from the courts. In Texas, Louisiana, and Georgia this is the case.

MISS EMILIE BULLOWA

The New York lawyer, who compiled laws relating to women in her state.

In Wyoming, where women vote, but where they are in such minority that their votes count for little, a married woman must satisfy the court that she is under the necessity of earning her living.

If you are a woman, married or unmarried, and wish to practice law, you are barred from seven of the United States. The legal profession is closed to women in Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, Arkansas, Delaware, Tennessee, and South Carolina.

In some States they discourage women from aspiring to the learned professions by refusing them the advantages of higher education which they provide for their brothers.

Four state universities close their doors to women, in spite of the fact that women's taxes help support the universities. These States are Georgia, Virginia, Louisiana, and North Carolina. The last-named admits women to post-graduate courses.

You can hold no kind of an elective office, you cannot be even a county superintendent

of schools in Alabama or Arkansas, if you are a woman. In Alabama, indeed, you may not be a minister of the gospel, a doctor of medicine, or a notary public. Florida likewise will have nothing to do with a woman doctor.

Only a few women want to hold office or engage in professional work. Every woman hopes to be a mother. What then is the legal status of the American mother? When the club women began the study of their position before the law they were amazed to find, in all but ten of the States and territories, that they had absolutely no control over the destinies of their own children. In ten States only, and in the District of Columbia, are women co-guardians with their husbands of their children.

In Pennsylvania if a woman supports her children, or has money to contribute to their support, she has joint guardianship. Under somewhat similar circumstances Rhode Island women have the same right.

In all the other States and territories chil-

dren belong to their fathers. They can be given away, or willed away, from the mother. That this almost never happens is due largely to the fact that, as a rule, no one except the mother of a child is especially keen to possess it.

It is due also in large measure to the fact that courts of justice are growing reluctant to administer such archaic laws.

The famous Tillman case is an example. Senator Ben Tillman of South Carolina has one son, — a dissipated, ill-tempered, and altogether disreputable man, whose wife, after several miserable years of married life, left him, taking with her their two little girls. South Carolina allows no divorce for any cause. The sanctity of the marriage tie is held so lightly in South Carolina that the law permits it to be abused at will by the veriest brute or libertine. Mrs. Tillman could not divorce her husband, so she took her children and went to live quietly at her parent's home in the city of Washington.

One day the father of the children, young

Tillman, appeared at that home, and in a fit of drunken resentment against his wife, kidnapped the children. He could not care for the children, probably had no wish to have them near him, but he took them back to South Carolina, and *gave* them to his parents, made a present of a woman's flesh and blood and heart to people who hated her and whom she hated in return.

Under the laws of South Carolina, under the printed statutes, young Tillman had a perfect right to do this thing, and his father, a United States Senator, upheld him in his act. Young Mrs. Tillman, however, showed so little respect for the statutes that she sued her husband and his parents to recover her babies. The judge before whom the suit was brought was in a dilemma. There was the law — but also there was justice and common sense. To the everlasting honor of that South Carolina judge, justice and common sense triumphed, and he ruled that *the law was unconstitutional.*

There are other hardships in this law denying to mothers the right of co-guardianship of their children. Two names signed to a child's working papers is a pretty good thing sometimes, for it often happens that selfish and lazy fathers are anxious to put their children to work, when the mothers know they are far too young. A woman in Scranton, Pennsylvania, told me, with tears filling her eyes, that her children had been taken by their father to the silk mills as soon as they were tall enough to suit a not too exacting foreman. "What could I say about it, when he went and got the papers?" she sighed.

The father — not the mother — controls the services of his children. He can collect their wages, and he does. Very, very often he squanders the money they earn, and no one may interfere.

A family of girls in Fall River, Massachusetts, were met every pay day at the doors of the mill by their father, who exacted of each one her pay envelope, unopened. It was

his regular day for getting drunk and indulging in an orgy of gambling. Often more than half of the girls' wages would have vanished before night. Twice the entire amount was wasted in an hour. This kept on until the girls passed their childhood and were mature enough to rebel successfully.

It is the father and not the mother that may claim the potential services of a child.

Many times have these unjust laws been protested against. In every State in the Union where they exist they have been protested against by organized groups of intelligent women. But their protests have been received with apathy, and, in some instances, with contempt by legislators. Only last year a determined fight was made by the women of California for a law giving them equal guardianship of their children. The women's bill was lost in the California Legislature, and lost by a large majority.

What arguments did the California legislators use against the proposed measure?

Identically the same that were made in Massachusetts and New York a quarter of a century ago. If women had the guardianship of their children, would anything prevent them from taking the children and leaving home? What would become of the sanctity of the home, with its lawful head shorn of his paternal dignity? In California a husband is head of the family in very fact, or at least a law of the State says so.

At one time the law which made the husband the head of the home guaranteed to the family support by the husband. It does not do that now. There are laws on the statute books of many States obliging the wife to support her husband if he is disabled, and the children, if the husband defaults. There are no laws compelling the husband to support his wife. The husband is under an assumed obligation to support his family, but there exists no means of forcing him to do his duty. Family desertion has become one of the commonest and one of the most baffling of modern

social problems. Everybody is appalled by its prevalence, but nobody seems to know what to do about it. The Legal Aid Society of New York City reports about three new cases of family desertion for every day in the year. Other agencies in other cities report a state of affairs quite as serious.

Laws have been passed in most States making family desertion a misdemeanor, and in New York a recent law has made it a felony. Unfortunately there has been devised no machinery to enforce these laws, so they are practically non-existent. It is true that if the deserting husband is arrested he may be sent to jail or to the rock pile.

But that does not cure him nor support his family. Mostly he is not arrested. He has only to take himself out of the reach of the local authorities. In New York a deserting husband, though he is counted a felon, needs only to cross the river to New Jersey to be reasonably safe. Imagine the State of New York spending good money to chase a man

whom it does not want as a citizen, and whom it can only punish by sending to jail for a short period. The State is better off without such a man. To bring him back would not even benefit his deserted family.

Women, far more law abiding than men, insist that a system which evolved out of feudal conditions, and has for its very basis the assumption of the weakness, ignorance, and dependence of women, has no place in twentieth century civilization.

American women are no longer weak, ignorant, dependent. The present social order, in which military force is subordinated to industry and commerce, narrows the gulf between them, and places men and women physically on much the same plane. As for women's intellectual ability to decide their own legal status, they are, taken the country over, rather better educated than men. There are more girls than boys in the high schools of the United States; more girls than boys in the higher grammar grades. Fewer women than

men are numbered among illiterate. As for the great middle class of women, it is obvious that they are better read than their men. Their specific knowledge of affairs may be less, but their general intelligence is not less than men's.

Increasingly women are ceasing to depend on men for physical support. Increasingly even married women are beginning to think of themselves as independent human beings. Their work of bearing and rearing children, of managing the household, begins to assume a new dignity, a real value, in their eyes.

In New Zealand at the present time statutes are proposed which shall determine exactly the share a wife may legally claim in her husband's income. American women may not need such a law, but they insist that they need something to take the place of that one which in eleven States makes it possible for a husband to claim all of his wife's income.

CHAPTER V

WOMEN'S DEMANDS ON THE RULERS OF INDUSTRY

The big elevator, crowded with shoppers to the point of actual discomfort, contained only one man. He wore a white-duck uniform, and recited rapidly and monotonously, as the car shot upward: "Corsets, millinery, muslin underwear, shirtwaists, coats and suits, infants' wear, and ladies' shoes, second floor; no ma'am, carpets and rugs on the third floor; this car don't go to the restaurant; take the other side; groceries, harness, sporting goods, musical instruments, phonographs, men's shoes, trunks, traveling bags, and toys, fifth floor."

Buying and selling, serving and being served — women. On every floor, in every aisle, at every counter, women. In the vast restaurant, which covers several acres, women.

Waiting their turn at the long line of telephone booths, women. Capably busy at the switch boards, women. Down in the basement buying and selling bargains in marked-down summer frocks, women. Up under the roof, posting ledgers, auditing accounts, attending to all the complex bookkeeping of a great metropolitan department store, women. Behind most of the counters on all the floors between, women. At every cashier's desk, at the wrappers' desks, running back and forth with parcels and change, short-skirted women. Filling the aisles, passing and repassing, a constantly arriving and departing throng of shoppers, women. Simply a moving, seeking, hurrying mass of femininity, in the midst of which the occasional man shopper, man clerk, and man supervisor, looks lost and out of place.

To you, perhaps, the statement that six million women in the United States are working outside of the home for wages is a simple, unanalyzed fact. You grasp it as an intellec-

tual abstraction, without much appreciation of its human significance. The mere reading of statistics does not help you to realize the changed status of women, and of society. You need to see the thing with your own eyes.

Standing on the corner of the Bowery and Grand Street, in New York, when the Third Avenue trains overhead are roaring their way uptown packed with homeward-bound humanity, or on the corner of State and Madison streets, in Chicago, or on the corner of Front and Lehigh streets, in Philadelphia; pausing at the hour of six at the junction of any city's great industrial arteries, you get a full realization of the change. Of the pushing, jostling, clamoring mob, which the sidewalks are much too narrow to contain, observe the preponderance of girls. From factory, office, and department store they come, thousands and tens of thousands of girls. Above the roar of the elevated, the harsh clang of the electric cars, the clatter of drays and wagons, the shouting of hucksters, the laughter and oaths

of men, their voices float, a shrill, triumphant treble in the orchestra of toil.

You may get another vivid, yet subtle, realization of the interdependence of women and modern industry if you manage to penetrate into the operating-room of a telephone exchange. Any hour will do. Any day in the week. There are no nights, nor Sundays, nor holidays in a telephone exchange. The city could not get along for one single minute in one single hour of the twenty-four without the telephone girl. Her hands move quickly over the face of the switch board, picking up long, silk-wound wires, reaching high, plugging one after another the holes of the switch board. The wires cross and recross, until the switch board is like a spider web, and in the tangle of lines under the hands of the telephone girl are enmeshed the business affairs of a city.

What would happen if this army of women was suddenly withdrawn from the telephone exchanges? Men could not take their places.

That experiment has been tried more than once, and it has always failed.

Having seen how well women serve industry, go back to the department store and see how they dominate it also.

The department store apparently exists for women. The architect who designed the building studied her necessities. The makers of store furniture planned counters, shelves, and seats to suit her stature. Buyers of goods know that their jobs are forfeit unless they can guess what her taste in gowns and hats is going to be six months hence.

Women's Demand on Industry

Woman dominates the department store for the plain reason that she supports it. Whoever earns the income, and that point has been somewhat in question lately, there is no doubt at all as to who spends it. She does. Hence, she is able to control the conditions under which this business is conducted.

You can see for yourself that this is so.

Walk through any large department store and observe how much valuable space is devoted to making women customers comfortable. There is always a drawing-room with easy-chairs and couches; plenty of little desks with handsome stationery where the customer may write notes; here, and in the retiring-room adjoining, are uniformed maids to offer service. But these things are not all that the women who support industry demand of the men in power. They demand that industry be carried on under conditions favorable to the health and comfort of the workers.

Not until the development of the department store were women able to observe at close range the conduct of modern business. Not unnaturally it was in the department store that they began one of the most ambitious of their present-day activities, — that of humanizing industry.

It was just twenty years ago that New York City was treated to a huge joke. It was such a joke that even the miserable ones with whom

it was concerned were obliged to smile. An obscure group of women, calling themselves the Working Women's Society, came out with the announcement that they proposed to form the women clerks of the city into a labor union.

These women said that the girls in the department stores were receiving wages lower than the sweat-shop standard. They said that a foreign woman in a downtown garment shop could earn seven dollars a week, whereas an American girl in a fashionable store received about four dollars and a half.

They also charged that the city ordinance providing seats for saleswomen was habitually violated, and that the girls were forced to stand from ten to fourteen hours a day. They said that sanitary conditions in the cloak rooms and lunch rooms of some of the stores were such as to endanger health and life. They said that the whole situation was so bad that no clerk endured it for a longer period than five years. Mostly they were used up in two

years. They proposed a labor union of retail clerks as the only possible resource. Their effort failed.

The trades union idea at that time had not reached the girl behind the counter. As a matter of fact it has not reached her yet, and it probably never will. The department-store clerk considers herself a higher social being than the ordinary working-girl, and in a way she is justified. The exceptionally intelligent department-store clerk has one chance in a thousand of rising to the well-paid, semi-professional post of buyer. Also the exceptionally attractive girl has possibly one chance in five thousand of marrying a millionaire. It is a long chance now, and it was a longer chance a dozen years ago, because there were fewer millionaires then than now, but it served well enough to cause the failure of the trades union plan.

There is one thing that never fails, however, and that is a righteous protest. Out of the protest of that little, obscure group of

working women in New York City was born a movement which has spread beyond the Atlantic Ocean, which has effected legislation in many States of the Union, which has even determined an extremely important legal decision in the Supreme Court of the United States.

A group of rich and influential women, prominent in many philanthropic efforts, became interested in the Working Women's Society. They investigated the charges brought against the department stores, and what they discovered made them resolve that conditions must be changed.

In May, 1890, the late Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell, Mrs. Frederick Nathan, and others, called a large mass meeting in Chickering Hall. Mrs. Nathan had a constructive plan for raising the standard in shop conditions, especially those affecting women employees.

If women would simply withdraw their patronage from the stores where, during the Christmas season, women and children toiled

long hours at night without any extra compensation, sooner or later the night work would cease. A few stores, said Mrs. Nathan, maintained a standard above the average. It was within the power of the women of New York to raise all the others to that standard, and afterwards it might be possible to go farther and establish a standard higher than the present highest.

"We do not desire to blacklist any firm," declared Mrs. Nathan, "but we can *whitelist* those firms which treat their employees humanely. We can make and publish a list of all the shops where employees receive fair treatment, and we can agree to patronize only those shops. By acting openly and publishing our White List we shall be able to create an immense public opinion in favor of just employers."

Thus was the Consumers' League of New York ushered into existence. Eight months after the Chickering Hall meeting the committee appointed to co-operate with the Work-

MRS. FREDERICK NATHAN
Founder and President of New York State
Consumers' League

ing Women's Society in preparing its list of fair firms had finished its work and made its report. The new League was formally organized on January 1, 1891.

The Consumers' League "White List"

The first White List issued in New York contained only eight firm names. The number was disappointingly small, even to those who knew the conditions. Still more disappointing was the indifference of the other firms to their outcast position. Far from evincing a desire to earn a place on the White List, they cast aspersions on a "parcel of women" who were trying to "undermine business credit," and scouted the very idea of an organized feminine conscience.

"Wait until the women want Easter bonnets," sneered one merchant. "Do you think they will pass up anything good because the store is not on their White List?"

Clearly something stronger than moral suasion was called for. Even as far back as

1891 a few women had begun to doubt the efficacy of that indirect influence, supposed to be woman's strongest weapon. What was the astonishment of the merchants when the League framed, and caused to be introduced into the New York Assembly, a bill known as the Mercantile Employers' Bill, to regulate the employment of women and children in mercantile establishments, and to place retail stores, from the smallest to the largest, under the inspection of the State Factory Department.

The bill was promptly strangled, but the next year, and the next, and still the next, it obstinately reappeared. Finally, in 1896, four years after it was first introduced, the bill struggled through the lower House. In spite of powerful commercial influences the bill was reported in the Senate, and some of the senators became warmly interested in it. A commission was appointed to make an official investigation into conditions of working women in New York City.

The findings of this Rheinhard Commission, published afterwards in two large volumes, were sensational enough. Merchants reluctantly testified to employing grown women at a salary of *thirty-three cents a day.* They confessed to employing little girls of eleven and twelve years, in defiance of the child-labor law. They declared that pasteboard and wooden stock boxes were good enough seats for saleswomen; that they should not expect to sit down in business hours anyhow. They defended, on what they called economic grounds, their long hours and uncompensated overtime. They defended their systems of fines, which sometimes took away from a girl almost the entire amount of her weekly salary. They threatened, if a ten-hour law for women under twenty-one years old were passed, to employ older women. Thus thousands of young and helpless girls would be thrown out of employment into the hands of charity.

The Senate heard the report of the Rheinhard Commission, and in spite of the mer-

chants' protests the women's bill was passed without a dissenting vote.

The most important provision of the bill was the ten-hour limit which it placed on the work of women under twenty-one. The overwhelming majority of department-store clerks are girls under twenty-one. The bill also provided seats for saleswomen, and specified the number of seats, — one to every three clerks. It forbade the employment of children, except those holding working certificates from the authorities. These, and other minor provisions, affected all retail stores, as far as the law was obeyed.

As a matter of fact the Consumers' League's bill carried a " joker " which made its full enforcement practically impossible. The matter of inspection of stores was given over to the local boards of health, supposedly experts in matters of health and sanitation, but, as it proved, ignorant of industrial conditions. In New York City, after a year of this inadequate inspection, political forces were

brought to bear, and then there were no store inspectors.

Year after year, for twelve years, the Consumers' League tried to persuade the legislature that department and other retail stores needed inspection by the State Factory Department. A little more than a year ago they succeeded. After the bill placing all retail stores under factory inspection was passed, a committee from the Merchants' Association went before Governor Hughes and appealed to him to veto what they declared was a vicious and wholly superfluous measure. Governor Hughes, however, signed the bill.

In the first three months of its enforcement over twelve hundred infractions of the Mercantile Law were reported in Greater New York. No less than nine hundred and twenty-three under-age children were taken out of their places as cash girls, stock girls, and wrappers, and were sent back to their homes or to school. The contention of the Con-

sumers' League that retail stores needed regulation seems to have been justified.

To the business man capital and labor are both abstractions. To women capital may be an abstraction, but labor is a purely human proposition, a thing of flesh and blood. The department-store owners who so bitterly fought the Mercantile Law, and for years afterwards fought its enforcement, were not monsters of cruelty. They were simply business men, with the business man's contracted vision. They could think only in terms of money profit and money loss.

In spite of this radical difference in the point of view, women have succeeded, in a measure, in controlling the business policy of the stores supported by their patronage.

The White List would be immensely larger if the Consumers' League would concede the matter of uncompensated overtime at the Christmas season. Hundreds of stores fill every condition of the standard except this one. The League stands firm on the point,

and up to the present so do the stores. Only the long, slow process of public education will remove the custom whereby *thousands of young girls and women are compelled every holiday season to give their employers from thirty to forty hours of uncompensated labor.*

No one has ever tried to compute the amount of unpaid overtime extorted in the business departments of nearly all city stores during three to five months of every winter. The customer, by declining to purchase after a certain hour, is able to release the weary saleswoman at six o'clock. She is not able to release the equally weary girls who toil in the bookkeeping and auditing departments.

That, in these days of adding and tabulating machines, accounting in most stores is still done by cheap hand labor, is a statement which strains credulity. Merely from the standpoint of business economy it seems absurd. But it is a fact easily verified.

I tested it by obtaining employment in the auditing department of one of the largest and

most respectable stores in New York. In this store, and, according to the best authorities, in most other stores, the accounting force is made up of girls not long out of grammar school, ignorant and incapable — but cheap. They work slowly, and as each day's sales are posted and audited before the close of the day following, the business force has to work until nine and ten o'clock several nights in the week. In some cases they work every night.

Only the enlightening power of education of employers, education of public opinion, can be expected to overcome this blight, and the Consumers' League, realizing this, is preparing the way for education.

The Consumers' League began with a purely benevolent motive, and in this early philanthropic stage it gained immediate popularity. City after city, State after State, formed Consumers' Leagues, until, in 1899, a National League, with branches in twenty-two States, was organized. The National League, far from being a philanthropic society, has be-

come a scientific association for the study of industrial economics.

When the original Consumers' League undertook its first piece of legislation in behalf of women workers the members knew that they were right, but they had very few reasons to offer in defense of their claim. The New York League and all of the others have been collecting reasons ever since. To-day they have a comprehensive and systematized collection of reasons why women should not work long hours; why they should not work at night; why manufacturing should not be carried on in tenements; why all home wage-earning should be forbidden; why the speed of machines should be regulated by law; why pure-food laws should be extended; why minimum wage rates should be established.

In the headquarters of the National League in New York City a group of trained experts work constantly, collecting and recording a vast body of facts concerning the human side

of industry. It is ammunition which tells. One single blast of it, fired in the direction of a laundry in Portland, Oregon, two years ago, performed the wonderful feat of blowing a large hole through the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.

There was a law in Oregon which decreed that the working day of women in factories and laundries should be ten hours long. The law was constantly violated, especially in the steam laundries of Portland. One night a factory inspector walked into the laundry of one Curt Muller, and found working there, long after closing time, one Mrs. Gotcher. The inspector promptly sent Mrs. Gotcher home and arrested Mr. Muller.

The next day in court Mr. Muller was fined ten dollars. Instead of paying the fine he appealed, backed up in his action by the other laundrymen of Portland, on the ground that the ten-hour law for women workers was unconstitutional. The Fourteenth Amendment

to the Constitution guarantees to every adult member of the community the right freely to contract. A man or a woman may contract with an employer to work as many hours a day, or a night, for whatever wages, in whatever dangerous or unhealthful or menacing conditions, *unless* "there is fair ground to say that there is material danger to the public health or safety, or to the health and safety of the employee, or to the general welfare. . . ." This is the legal decision on which most protective legislation in the United States has been based.

Several years ago, in Illinois, a law providing an eight-hour day for women was declared unconstitutional because nobody's health or safety was endangered; and on the same grounds the same fate met a New York law forbidding all-night employment of women.

So Mr. Curt Muller and the laundrymen of Portland, Oregon, had reason to believe that they could attack the Oregon law. The case was appealed, and appealed again, by the

laundrymen, and finally reached the Supreme Court of the United States. Then the Consumers' League took a hand.

The brief for the State of Oregon, "defendant in error," was prepared by Louis D. Brandeis, of Boston, assisted by Josephine Goldmark, one of the most effective workers in the League's New York headquarters. This brief is probably one of the most remarkable legal documents in existence. It consists of one hundred and twelve printed pages, of which a few paragraphs were written by the attorney for the State. All the rest was contributed, under Miss Goldmark's direction, from the Consumers' League's wonderful collection of reasons why women workers should be protected.

The League's reply to the Oregon laundrymen who asked leave to work their women employees far into the night was, "The World's Experience upon Which the Legislation Limiting the Hours of Labor for Women is Based." It is simply a mass of

testimony taken from hearings before the English Parliament, before state legislatures, state labor boards; from the reports of factory inspectors in many countries; from reports of industrial commissions in the United States and elsewhere; from medical books; from reports of boards of health.

Reasons for Protecting Women Workers

The brief included a short and interesting chapter, containing a number of things the League had collected on the subject of laundries. Supreme Court judges cannot be expected to know that laundry work is classed by experts among the dangerous trades. That washing clothes, from a simple home or backyard occupation, has been transformed into a highly-organized factory trade full of complicated and often extremely dangerous machinery; that the atmosphere of a steam laundry is more conducive to tuberculosis and the other occupational diseases than cotton mills; that the work in laundries, being irreg-

ular, is conducive to a general low state of morals; that, on the whole, women should not be required to spend more time than necessary in laundries; all this was set forth.

Medical testimony showed the physical differences between men and women; the lesser power of women to endure long hours of standing; the heightened susceptibility of women to industrial poisons — lead, naphtha, and the like. A long chapter of testimony on the effect of child-bearing in communities where the women had toiled long hours before marriage, or afterwards, was included.

The testimony of factory inspectors, of industrial experts, of employers in England, Germany, France, America, revealed the bad effect of long hours on women's safety, both physical and moral. It revealed the good effect, on the individual health, home life, and general welfare, of short hours of labor.

Nor was the business aspect of the case neglected. That people accomplish as much in an eight-hour day as in a twelve- hour day

has actually been demonstrated. The brief stated, for one instance, the experience of a bicycle factory in Massachusetts.

In this place young women were employed to sort the ball bearings which went into the machines. They did this by touch, and no girl was of use to the firm unless her touch was very sensitive and very sure. The head of this firm became convinced that the work done late in the afternoon was of inferior quality, and he tried the experiment of cutting the hours from ten to nine. The work was done on piece wages, and the girls at first protested against the nine-hour day, fearing that their pay envelopes would suffer. To their astonishment they earned as much in nine hours as they had in ten. In time the employer cut the working day down to eight hours and a half, and in addition gave the girls ten-minute rests twice a day. Still they earned their full wages, and they continued to earn full wages after the day became eight hours long. The employer testified before the

United States Industrial Commission of 1900 that he believed he could successfully shorten the day to seven hours and a half and get the same amount of work accomplished.

What can you do against testimony like that? The Consumers' League convinced the Supreme Court of the United States, and the Oregon ten-hour law was upheld.

The importance of this decision cannot be overestimated. On it hangs the validity of nearly all the laws which have been passed in the United States for the protection of women workers. If the Oregon law had been declared unconstitutional, laws in twenty States, or practically all the States where women work in factories, would have been in perpetual danger, and the United States might easily have sunk to a position occupied now by no leading country in Europe.

Great Britain has had protective legislation for women workers since 1844. In 1847 the labor of women in English textile mills was limited to ten hours a day, the period we are

now worrying about, as being possibly contrary to our Constitution. France, within the past five years, has established a ten-hour day, broken by one hour of rest. Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Austria, Italy, limit the hours of women's labor. In several countries there are special provisions giving extra time off to women who have household responsibilities. What would our Constitution-bound law makers say to such a proposition, if any one had the hardihood to suggest it?

If this law had not been upheld by the United States Supreme Court the women of no State could have hoped to secure further legislation for women workers. As it is, women in many States are preparing to establish what is now known as "The Oregon Standard," that is, a ten-hour day for all working women.

Nothing in connection with the woman movement is more significant, certainly nothing was more unexpected, than the voluntary abandonment, on the part of women, of class

prejudice and class distinctions. Where formerly the interest of the leisured woman in her wage-earning sisters was of a sentimental or philanthropic character, it has become practical and democratic.

The Young Women's Christian Association has had an industrial department, which up to a recent period concerned itself merely with the spiritual welfare of working girls. Prayer meetings in factories, clubs, and classes in the Association headquarters, working-girls' boarding homes, and other philanthropic efforts were the limits of the Association's activities. The entire policy has changed of late, and under the capable direction of Miss Annie Marian MacLean, of Brooklyn, New York, the industrial department of the Association is doing scientific investigation of labor conditions of women.

In a cracker factory I once saw a paid worker in the Young Women's Christian Association pause above a young girl lying on the floor, crimson with fever, and apparently

in the throes of a serious illness. With angelic pity on her face the Association worker stooped and slipped a tract into the sick girl's hand. The kind of industrial secretary the Association now employs would send for an ambulance and see that the girl had the best of hospital care. She would inquire whether the girl's illness was caused by the conditions under which she worked, and she would know if it were possible to have those conditions changed.

Women's Clubs Studying Labor Problems

Nearly every state federation of women's clubs has its industrial committee, and many large clubs have a corresponding department. It is these industrial sections of the women's clubs which are such a thorn in the flesh of Mr. John Kirby, Jr., the new president of the National Manufacturers' Association. In his inaugural address Mr. Kirby warned his colleagues that women's clubs were not the ladylike, innocuous institutions that too-confiding

man supposed them to be. In those clubs, he declared, their own wives and daughters were listening to addresses by the worst enemies of the Manufacturers' Association, the labor leaders. By which he meant that the club women were inviting trade-union men and women to present the worker's side of industrial subjects. "Soon," exclaimed Mr. Kirby, "we shall have to fight the women as well as the unions."

The richest and most aristocratic woman's club in the country is the Colony Club of New York. The Colony Club was organized by a number of women from the exclusive circles of New York society, after the manner of men's clubs. The women built a magnificent clubhouse on Madison Avenue, furnished it with every luxury, including a wonderful roof-garden. For a time the Colony Club appeared to be nothing more than a beautiful toy which its members played with. But soon it began to develop into a sort of a woman's forum, where all sorts of social topics were discussed.

Visiting women of distinction, artists, writers, lecturers, were entertained there.

Last year the club inaugurated a Wednesday afternoon course in industrial economics. The women did not invite lecturers from Columbia University to address them. They asked John Mitchell and many lesser lights of the labor world. They wanted to learn, at first hand, the facts concerning conditions of industry. Most of them are stockholders in mills, factories, mines, or business establishments. Many own real estate on which factories stand.

"It is not fair," they have openly declared, "that we should enjoy wealth and luxury at the cost of illness, suffering, and death. We do not want wealth on such terms."

The Colony Club members, and the women who form the Auxiliary to the National Civic Federation, have for their object improvement in the working and living conditions of wage earners in industries and in governmental institutions. A few conscientious employers

have spent a part of their profits to make their employees comfortable. They have given them the best sanitary conditions, good air, strong light, and comfortable seats. They have provided rest rooms, lunch rooms, vacation houses, and the like.

No one should belittle such efforts on the part of employers. Equally, no one should regard them as a solution of the industrial problem. Nor should they be used as a substitute for justice.

Too often this so-called welfare work has been clumsily managed, untactfully administered. Too often it has been instituted, not to benefit the workers, but to advertise the business. Too often its real object was a desire to play the philanthropist's rôle, to exact obsequience from the wage earner.

I know a corset factory which makes a feature in its advertising of the perfect sanitary condition of its works; when visitors are expected, the girls are required to stop work and clean the rooms. Since they work on a piece-

MRS. J. BORDEN HARRIMAN

President of the Colony Club, New York, the most exclusive Women's Club in the country.

work scale, the "perfect sanitary conditions" exist at their expense. In a department store I know, employees are required to sign a printed expression of gratitude for overtime pay or an extra holiday. This kind of welfare work simply alienates employees from their employers. It always fails.

It seems to the women who have studied these things that proper sanitary conditions, lunch rooms, comfortable seats, provision for rest, vacations with pay, and the like are no more than the wage earner's due. They are a part of the laborer's hire, and should be guaranteed by law, exactly as wages are guaranteed. An employer deserves gratitude for overtime pay no more than for fire escapes.

Testimony gathered from all sources by the Consumers' League, women's clubs, and women's labor organizations has proved beyond doubt that good working conditions, reasonable hours of work, and living wages vastly increase the efficiency of the workers, and thus increase the profits of the employers.

The New York Telephone Company does not set itself up to be a benevolent institution. Its directors know that its profits depend on the excellence of its service. There is one exchange in the Borough of Brooklyn which handles a large part of the Long Island traffic. This traffic is very heavy in summer on account of the number of summer resorts along the coast. In the fall and winter the traffic is very light. Six months in the year the operators at this exchange work only half the day, yet the company keeps them on full salary the year round. "We cannot afford to do anything else," explains the traffic manager. "We cannot afford operators who would be content with half wages."

The old-time dry-goods merchant sincerely believed that his business would suffer if he provided seats for his saleswomen. He believed that he would go into bankruptcy if he allowed his women clerks human working conditions. Then came the Consumers' League and mercantile laws, and a new pressure of

MISS ELIZABETH MALONEY

Financial Secretary, Waitresses' Union, 484, of Chicago, chief force in girls' law in Illinois

public opinion, and the dry-goods merchant found out that a clerk in good physical condition sells more goods than one that is exhausted and uncomfortable.

The fact is that welfare work, carefully shorn of its name, has proved itself to be such good business policy that in future all intelligent employers will advocate it; public opinion will demand it; laws will provide for it.

It used to be the invariable custom in stores — it is so still in a few — to lay off many clerks during the dull seasons. Now the best stores find that they can better afford to give all their employees vacations with pay. A clerk coming home after a vacation can sell goods, even in dull times. More and more employers are coming to appreciate the money value of the Saturday half-holiday in summer. Hearn, in New York, closes his department store all day Saturday during July and August. The store sells more goods in five days than it previously sold in six.

The Filene System of Developing Efficient Workers

There is one department store which has demonstrated that it is profitable to pay higher wages than its competitors, and that it pays to allow the employees to fix the terms of their own employment. This is the Filene store in Boston, which has developed within the past ten years from a conservative, old-fashioned dry-goods business into an extremely original and interesting experiment station in commercial economics.

The entire policy of the Filene management is bent on developing to the highest possible point the efficiency of each individual clerk. The best possible material is sought. No girl under sixteen is employed, and no girl of any age who has not graduated with credit from the grammar schools. There are a number of college-bred men and women in the Filene employ.

Good wages are paid, even to beginners, and

A Department Store Rest-Room for Women

This luxurious apartment in Gimbel Brothers' New York store shows the lavishness with which the great department stores seek the comfort of their customers.

experienced employees are rewarded, not according to a fixed rate of payment, but according to earning capacity. Taken throughout the store, wages, plus commissions, which are allowed in all departments, average about two dollars a week higher than in other department stores in Boston.

No irresponsible, automatic employee can develop high efficiency. She does not want to become efficient; she wants merely to receive a pay envelope at the end of the week. In order to develop responsibility and initiative in their employees the Filenes have put them on a self-governing basis. The workers do not literally make their own rules, but the vote of the majority can change any rule made by the firm. The firm furnishes its employees with a printed book of rules, in which the policy of the store is set forth. If the employees object to any of the rules, or any part of the policy, they can vote a change.

The medium through which the clerks express their opinions and desires is the Filene

Co-operative Association, of which every clerk and every employee in the place is a member. No dues are exacted, as is the custom in the usual employees' association. The executive body, called the Store Council, and all other officers are elected by the members. All matters of grievance, all subjects of controversy, are referred to the Store Council, which, as often as occasion demands, calls a meeting of the entire association after business hours.

For example: Christmas happens on a Friday. The firm decides to keep the store open on the following day — Saturday. There is an expression of dissatisfaction from a number of clerks. A meeting of the association is called, and a vote taken as to whether the majority want the extra holiday or not; whether the majority are willing to lose the commissions on a day's sales, for, of course, salaries continue. The vote reveals that the majority want the holiday. The Store Council so reports to the firm, and the firm must grant the holiday.

All matters of difficulty arising between employers and employed, in the Filene store, are settled not by the firm, but by the Arbitration Board of Employees, also elected by popular vote. All disagreements as to wages, position, promotion, all questions of personal issue between saleswomen and aislemen, or others in authority, are referred to the Board of Arbitration, and the board's decision is final. There is no tyranny of the buyer, no arbitrary authority of the head of a department. Every clerk knows that her tenure is secure as long as she is an efficient saleswoman.

Surely it is not too much to hope that, in a future not too far distant, all women who earn their bread will serve a system of industry adjusted by law to human standards. In enlightened America the courts, presided over by men to whom manual labor is known only in theory, have persistently ruled that the *Constitution forbade the State to make laws protecting women workers.* It has seemed to most of our courts and most of our judges

that the State fulfilled its whole duty to its women citizens when it guaranteed them the right freely to contract — even though they consented, or their poverty consented, to contracts which involved irreparable harm to themselves, the community, and future generations. The women of this country have done nothing more important than to educate the judiciary of the United States out of and beyond this terrible delusion.

CHAPTER VI

MAKING OVER THE FACTORY FROM THE INSIDE

The decision of the United States Supreme Court, establishing the legality of restricted hours of labor for Oregon working women, was received with especial satisfaction in the State of Illinois. The Illinois working women, or that thriving minority of them organized in labor unions, had been waiting sixteen years for a favorable opportunity to get an eight-hour day for themselves. Sixteen years ago the Illinois State Legislature gave the working women such a law, and two years later the Illinois Supreme Court took it away from them, on the ground that it was unconstitutional.

The action of the Illinois Supreme Court was by no means without precedent. Many similar decisions had been handed down in other States, until it had become almost a prin-

ciple of American law that protective legislation for working women was invalid.

The process of reasoning by which learned judges reach the conclusion that an eight-hour day for men may be decreed without depriving anybody of his constitutional rights, and at the same time rule that women would be outrageously wronged by having their working hours limited, may appear obscure.

The explanation is, after all, simple. The learned judges are men, and they know something — not much, but still something — about the men of the working classes. They know, for example, something about the conditions under which coal miners work, and they can see that it is contrary to public interests that men should toil underground, at arduous labor, twelve hours a day. Accidents result with painful frequency, and these are bad things, — bad for miners and mine owners alike. They are bad for the whole community. Therefore the regulation of miners' hours of labor comes legitimately under the police powers of the law.

The learned judges, I say this with all due respect, do not know anything about working women. Their own words prove it. The texts of their decisions, denying the constitutionality of protective measures, are amazing in the ignorance they display, — ignorance of industrial conditions surrounding women; ignorance of the physical effects of certain kinds of labor on young girls; ignorance of the effect of women's arduous toil on the birth rate; ignorance of moral conditions in trades which involve night work; ignorance of the injury to the home resulting from the sweated labor of tenement women. In brief, the learned judges, when they write opinions involving the health, the happiness, the very lives of women workers, might be writing about the inhabitants of another planet, so little knowledge do they display of the real facts.

We have seen how the women of the Consumers' League taught the United States Supreme Court something about working women; showed them a few of the calamities resulting

from the unrestricted labor of women and immature girls. The Supreme Court's decision forever abolished the old fallacy that the American Constitution *forbids* protective legislation for women workers. It remains for women's organizations in the various States to educate local courts up to the knowledge that community interest *demands* protective legislation.

Following the decision of the Supreme Court in the Oregon case, which flatly contradicted the decision of the Illinois Supreme Court, the working women of Illinois began their educational campaign. They had now, for the first time, a fighting chance to secure the restoration of their shortened work day. The women of fifteen organized trades in the city of Chicago determined to take that chance.

The women first appealed to the Industrial Commission, appointed early in 1908 by Governor Dineen, to investigate the need of protective legislation for workers, men and women alike.

The women were given a courteous hearing, but were told frankly that limited hours of work for women was not one of protective measures to be recommended by the Commission.

The Waitresses' Union, Local No. 484, of Chicago, entered the lists, led by a remarkable young woman, Elizabeth Maloney, financial secretary of the union. Miss Maloney and her associates drafted and introduced into the Illinois Legislature a bill providing an eight-hour working day for every woman in the State, working in shop, factory, retail store, laundry, hotel, or restaurant, and providing also ample machinery for enforcing the measure.

The "Girls' Bill," as it immediately became known, was the most hotly contested measure passed by the Illinois Legislature during the session. Over five hundred manufacturers appeared at the public hearing on the bill to protest against it. One man brought a number of meek and tired women employees, who, he declared, were opposed to having their working

day made shorter. Another presented a petition signed by his women employees, appealing against being prevented from working eleven hours a day!

Nine working girls appeared in support of the bill, and after learned counsel for the Manufacturers' Association had argued against the measure, two of the girls were allowed to speak. The Manufacturers' Association presented the business aspect of the question, the girls confined themselves to the human side. Agnes Nestor, secretary of the Glove Makers' Union of the United States and Canada, was one of the two girls who spoke. Miss Nestor, whose eyes are blue, whose manners are gentle, and whose best weight is ninety-five pounds, had to stand on a chair that the law makers might see her when she made her plea. Elizabeth Maloney, of the Waitresses' Union, was the other speaker.

They described details in the daily lives of working women not generally known except to the workers themselves. Among these was

the piece-work system, which too often means a system whereby the utmost possible speed is extorted from the toiler, in order that she may earn a living wage. The legislators were asked to imagine themselves operating a machine whose speed was gauged up to nine thousand stitches a minute; to consider how many stitches the operator's hand must guide in a week, a month, a year, in order to earn a living; working thus eleven, twelve hours a day, knowing that the end was nervous breakdown, and decrease of earning power.

"I am a waitress," said Miss Maloney, "and I work ten hours a day. In that time a waitress who is tolerably busy *walks* ten miles, and the dishes she carries back and forth aggregate in weight fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds. Don't you think eight hours a day is enough for a girl to walk?"

Only one thing stood in the way of the passage of the bill after that day. The doubt of its constitutionality proved an obstacle too grave for the friends of the workers to over-

come. It was decided to substitute a ten-hour bill, an exact duplicate of the "Oregon Standard" established by the Supreme Court of the United States. The principle of limitation upon the hours of women's work once established in Illinois, the workers could proceed with their fight for an eight-hour day.

The manufacturers lost their fight, and the ten-hour bill became a law of the State of Illinois. The Manufacturers' Association, through the W. C. Ritchie Paper Box Manufactory, of Chicago, immediately brought suit to test the constitutionality of the law. Two Ritchie employees, Anna Kusserow and Dora Windeguth, made appeal to the Illinois courts. Their appeal declared that they could not make enough paper boxes in ten hours to earn their bread, and that their constitutional rights freely to contract, as well as their human rights, had been taken away from them by the ten-hour law.

There was a terrible confession, on the part of the employers, involved in this protest

against the ten-hour day, a confession of the wretched state of women's wages in the State of Illinois. If women of mature years — one of the petitioners had been an expert box maker for over thirty years — are unable, in a day of ten hours, to earn enough to keep body and soul together, is it not proved that women workers are in no position freely to contract? For who, of her own free will, would contract to work ten hours a day for less than the price of life?

There was sitting in the Circuit Court of Illinois at that time Judge R. S. Tuthill. When Judge Tuthill, in old age, reviews the events of his career, I think he will not remember with pride that he was blind to the real meaning of that petition of Anna Kusserow and Dora Windeguth. For Judge Tuthill issued an injunction against the State Factory Department, forbidding them to enforce the ten-hour law.

Immediately a number of women's organizations joined hands with the women's trade unions in the fight to save the bill. When it

came up in the December term of the Illinois Supreme Court, Louis D. Brandeis of Boston, the same able jurist who had argued the Oregon case, was on hand. This time his brief was a book of six hundred and ten printed pages, over which Miss Pauline Goldmark, of the National Consumers' League, and a large corps of trained investigators and students had toiled for many months. The World's Experience Against the Illinois Circuit Court, this document might well have been called. It was simply a digest of the evidence of governmental commissions, laboratories, and bodies of scientific research, on the effects of overwork, and especially of overtime work, on girls and women, and through them on the succeeding generation. Incidentally the brief contained three pages of law.

The most striking part of the argument contained in the brief was the testimony of physicians on the toxin of fatigue.

"Medical Science has demonstrated," says this most important paragraph, "that while

fatigue is a normal phenomenon . . . excessive fatigue or exhaustion is abnormal. . . . It has discovered that fatigue is due not only to actual poisoning, but to a specific poison or toxin of fatigue, entirely analogous in chemical and physical nature to other bacterial toxins, such as the diphtheria toxin. It has been shown that when artificially injected into animals in large amounts the fatigue toxin causes death. The fatigue toxin in normal quantities is said to be counteracted by an antidote or antitoxin, also generated in the body. But as soon as fatigue becomes abnormal the antitoxin is not produced fast enough to counteract the poison of the toxin."

The Supreme Court of the State of Illinois decided that the American Constitution was never intended to shield manufacturers in their willingness to poison women under pretense of giving them work. The ten-hour law was sustained.

That the " Girls' Bill " passed, or that it was even introduced, was due in large measure to

an organization of women, more militant and more democratic than any other in the United States. This is the Women's Trade Union League. Formed in New York about seven years ago, the League consists of women members of labor unions, a few men in organized trades, and many women outside the ranks of wage earners. Some of these latter are women of wealth, who are believers in the trade-union principle, but more are women who work in the professional ranks, — teachers, lawyers, physicians, writers, artists, settlement workers. These are the first professional workers, men or women, who ever asked for and were given affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. They are the first people, outside the ranks of wage earners, to appear in Labor Day parades.

The object of the League, which now has branches in five cities, — New York, Boston, Chicago, St. Louis, and Cleveland, — is to educate women wage earners in the doctrine of trade unionism. The League trains and sup-

ports organizers among all classes of workers. As quickly as a group in any trade seems ready for organizing the League helps them. It raises funds to assist women in their trade struggles. It acts as arbitrator between employer and wage earners in case of shop disputes.

The Women's Trade Union League reaches not only women in factory trades, but it has succeeded in organizing women who until lately believed themselves to be a grade above this social level. One hundred and fifty dressmakers in New York City belong to a union. Seventy stenographers have organized in the same city. The Teachers' Federation of Chicago is a labor union, and although it was formed before the Women's Trade Union League came into existence, it is now affiliated. The women telegraphers all over the United States are well organized.

The businesslike, resourceful, and fearless policy of the League was brilliantly demonstrated during the famous strike of the shirt-

waist makers in New York and Philadelphia in the winter of 1910. The story of this strike will bear retelling.

On the evening of November 22, 1909, there was a great mass meeting of workers held at Cooper Union in New York. Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor, presided, and the stage was well filled with members of the Women's Trade Union League. The meeting had been called by the League in conjunction with Shirt-Waist Makers' Union, Local 25, to consider the grievances of shirt-waist makers in general, and especially of the shirt-waist makers in the Triangle factory, who had been, for more than two months, on strike.

The story of the strike, the causes that led up to it, and the bitter injustice which followed it were rehearsed in a dozen speeches. It was shown that for four to five dollars a week the girl shirt-waist makers worked from eight in the morning until half-past five in the evening two days in the week; from eight in the morn-

ing until nine at night four days in the week; and from eight in the morning until noon one day in the week — Sunday.

The shirt-waist makers in the Triangle factory, in hope of bettering their conditions, had formed a union, and had informed their employers of their action. The employers promptly locked them out of the shop, and the girls declared a strike.

The strike was more than two months old when the Cooper Union meeting was held, and the employers showed no signs of giving in. It was agreed that a general strike of shirt-waist makers ought to be declared. But the union was weak, there were no funds, and most of the shirt-waist makers were women and unused to the idea of solidarity in action. Could they stand together in an industrial struggle which promised to be long and bitter?

President Gompers was plainly fearful that they could not.

Suddenly a very small, very young, very intense Jewish girl, known to her associates as

Clara Lemlich, sprang to her feet, and, with the assistance of two young men, climbed to the high platform. Flinging up her arms with a dramatic gesture she poured out a flood of speech, entirely unintelligible to the presiding Gompers, and to the members of the Women's Trade Union League. The Yiddish-speaking majority in the audience understood, however, and the others quickly caught the spirit of her impassioned plea.

The vast audience rose as one man, and a great roar arose. "Yes, we will all strike!"

"And will you keep the faith?" cried the girl on the platform. "Will you swear by the old Jewish oath of our fathers?"

Two thousand Jewish hands were thrust in air, and two thousand Jewish throats uttered the oath: "If I turn traitor to the cause I now pledge, may this hand wither and drop off from this arm I now raise."

Clara Lemlich's part in the work was accomplished. Within a few days forty thousand shirt-waist makers were on strike.

The Women's Trade Union League, under the direction of Miss Helen Marot, secretary, at once took hold of the strike.

There were two things to be done at once. The forty thousand had to be enrolled in the union, and those manufacturers who were willing to accept the terms of the strikers had to be "signed up." Clinton Hall, one of the largest buildings on the lower East Side, was secured, and for several weeks the rooms and hallways of the building and the street outside were crowded almost to the limit of safety with men and women strikers, anxious and perspiring "bosses," and busy, active associates of the Women's Trade Union League.

The immediate business needs of the organization being satisfied the League members undertook the work of picketing the shops. Picketing, if this activity has not been revealed to you, consists in patrolling the neighborhood of the factories during the hours when the strike breakers are going to and from their

nefarious business, and importuning them to join the strike.

Peaceful picketing is legal. The law permits a striker to speak to the girl who has taken her place, permits her to present her cause in her most persuasive fashion, but if she lays her hand, ever so gently on the other's arm or shoulder, this constitutes technical violence.

Up to the time when the League began picketing there had been a little of this technical, and possibly an occasional act of real, violence. After the League took a hand there was none. Each group of union girls who went forth to picket was accompanied by one or more League members. Some of these amateur pickets were girls fresh from college, and among these were Elsie Cole, the brilliant daughter of Albany's Superintendent of Schools, Inez Milholland, the beautiful and cherished daughter of a millionaire father, leader of her class, of 1909, in Vassar College, Elizabeth Dutcher and Violet Pike, both prominent in the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ. These young women went

out day after day with girl strikers, endured the insults and threats of the police, suffered arrest on more than one occasion, and faced the scorn and indignation of magistrates who — well, who did not understand.

The strike received an immense amount of publicity, and organizations of women other than the Women's Trade Union League began to take an interest in it. They sent for Miss Marot, Miss Cole, Miss Gertrude Barnum, and other women known to be familiar with the industrial world of women, and begged for enlightenment on the subject of the strike. They particularly asked to hear the story from the striking women in person.

The exclusive Colony Club, to which only women of the highest social eminence are eligible, was called together by Miss Anne Morgan and several others, including Mrs. Egerton Winthrop, wife of the president of the New York Board of Education, to hear the story from the strikers' own lips. The Colony Club was swept into the shirt-waist strike.

More than thirteen hundred dollars was collected in a few minutes. A dozen women promised influence and personal service in behalf of the strikers.

A week later Mrs. O. H. P. Belmont, mother of the Duchess of Marlborough, leader of a large Woman Suffrage Association, engaged the Hippodrome, and packed it to the roof with ten thousand interested spectators. Something like five thousand dollars was donated by this meeting.

At the beginning of the strike fully five hundred waist houses were involved. Many of these settled within a few days on the basis of increased pay, a fifty-two-hour working week, and recognition of the union. Others settled later, and under the influence of the "uptown scum," as the employers' association gallantly termed the Women's Trade Union League, the Colony Club, and the Suffragists, still others reluctantly gave in. Late in January all except about one hundred out of the five hundred had settled with the union, and only about three

thousand of the workers were still out of work.

Women have been called the scabs of the labor world. That they would ever become trade unionists, ever evolve the class consciousness of the intelligent proletarian men, was deemed an impossible dream. Above all, that their progress towards industrial emancipation would ever be helped along by the wives and daughters of the employing classes was unthinkable. That the releasing of one class of women from household labor by sending another class of women into the factory, there to perform their historic tasks of cooking, sewing, and laundry work, was to result in the humanizing of industry, no mind ever prophesied.

Yet these things are coming. The scabs of the labor world are becoming the co-workers instead of the competitors of men. The women of the leisure classes, almost as fast as their eyes are opened to the situation, espouse the cause of their working sisters.

The woman in the factory is preparing to make over that factory or to close it.

The history of a recent strike in a carpet mill in Roxbury, Massachusetts, is a perfect history, in miniature, of the progress of the working women.

That particular mill is very old and very well known. When it was established, more than a generation ago, the owner was a man who knew every one of his employees by name, was especially considerate of the women operatives, and was loved and respected by every one. Hours of labor were long, but the work was done in a leisurely fashion, and wages were good enough to compensate for the long day's labor.

The original owner died, and in time the new firm changed to a corporation. The manager knew only his office force and possibly a few floor superintendents and foremen. The rest of the force were "hands."

The whole state of the industry was altered. New and complicated machinery was intro-

duced. The shortened work day was a hundred times more fatiguing to the workers because of the increased speed and nerve-racking noise and jar of the machinery. Other grievances developed. The quality of the yarn furnished the weavers was often so bad that they spent hours of unpaid labor mending a broken warp or manipulating a rotten shuttle full of yarn. Wages, fixed according to the piece system, declined, it is said, at least one-fourth. Women who had formerly earned thirteen dollars a week were reduced to seven and eight dollars.

The women formed a union and struck. Some of them had been in the mills as long as forty years, but they walked out with the girls.

There you have the story of women's realization of themselves as a group. Next you encounter the realization of the sisterhood of women. The Boston Branch of the Women's Trade Union League, through its secretary, Mabel Gillespie, Radcliffe graduate, joined

the strikers. Backed up by the Boston Central Labor Union, and the United Textile Workers of Fall River, the strikers fought their fight during ten weeks of anxiety and deprivation.

The employers were firm in their determination to go out of business before treating with the strikers as a group. A hand, mind you, exists as an individual, a very humble individual, but one to be received and conferred with. Hands, considered collectively, have no just right to exist. An employers' association is a necessity of business life. A labor union is an insult to capital.

This was the situation at the end of ten weeks. One day a motor car stopped in front of the offices of the mills and a lady emerged. Mrs. Glendower Evans, conservative, cultured, one might say Back Bay personified, had come to Roxbury to see the carpet manufacturer. Her powers of persuasion, plus her social position and her commercial connections, were sufficient to wring consent from the

firm to receive John Golden, president of the United Textile Workers.

John Golden, intelligent, honest, a fine type of workingman, educated in the English school of unionism, held two conferences with the firm. He was able to make the employers see the whole situation in an entirely new light. They were men of probity; they wanted to be fair; and when they saw the human side of the struggle they surrendered. When they perceived the justice of the collective bargain, the advantages to both sides of a labor organization honestly conducted, they consented to recognize the union. And the women went back, their group unbroken.

Thus are women working, women of all classes, to humanize the factory. From the outside they are working to educate the legislatures and the judiciary. They are lending moral and financial support to the women of the toiling masses in their struggle to make over the factory from the inside. Together they are impressing the men of the working

world, law makers and judges, with the justice of protecting the mothers of the race.

Now that the greatest stumbling block to industrial protective legislation has been removed, we may hope to see a change in legal decisions handed down in our courts. The educational process is not yet complete. Not every judge possesses the prophetic mind of the late Justice Brewer, who wrote the decision in the Oregon Case. Not every court has learned that healthy men and women are infinitely more valuable to a nation than mere property. But in time they will learn.

In distant New Zealand, not long ago, there was a match factory in which a number of women worked for low wages. After fruitless appeals to the owner for better wages the workers resorted to force. They did not strike. In New Zealand you do not have to strike, because in that country a substitute for the strike is provided by law. To this substitute, a Court of Arbitration, the women took their grievance. The employer in his answer declared,

just as employers in this country might have done, that his business would not stand an increase in wages. He explained that the match industry was newly established in New Zealand, and that, until it was on a secure basis, factory owners could not afford to pay high wages.

The judge ordered an inquiry. In this country it would have been an inquiry into the state of the match industry. There it was an inquiry into the cost of living in the town where the match factory was located. And then the judge summoned the factory owner to the Court of Arbitration, and this is what he said to the man:

"It is impossible for these girls to live decently or healthfully on the wages you are now paying. It is of the utmost importance that they should have wholesome and healthful conditions of life. The souls and bodies of the young women of New Zealand are of more importance than your profits, and if you cannot pay living wages it will be better for the

community for you to close your factory. *It would be better to send the whole match industry to the bottom of the ocean, and go back to flints and firesticks, than to drive young girls into the gutter.* My award is that you pay what they ask."

Does that sound like justice to you? It does to me; it does to the eight million women in the world who have learned to think in human terms.

CHAPTER VII

BREAKING THE GREAT TABOO

At the threshold of that quarter of old New York called Greenwich Village stands Jefferson Market Court. Almost concealed behind the towering structure of the Sixth Avenue Elevated, the building by day is rather inconspicuous. But when night falls, swallowing up the neighborhood of tangled streets and obscure alleyways, Jefferson Market assumes prominence. High up in the square brick tower an illuminated clock seems perpetually to be hurrying its pointing hands toward midnight. From many windows, barred for the most part, streams an intense white light. Above an iron-guarded door at the side of the building floats a great globe of light, and beneath its glare, through the iron-guarded door, there passes, every week-day night in the year, a long procession of prodigals.

The guarded door seldom admits any one as important, so to speak, as a criminal. The criminal's case waits for day. The Night Court in Jefferson Market sits in judgment only on the small fry caught in the dragnet of the police. Tramps, vagrants, drunkards, brawlers, disturbers of the peace, speeding chaffeurs, licenseless peddlers, youths caught red-handed shooting craps or playing ball in the streets, — these are the men with whom the Night Court deals. But it is not the men we have come to see.

The women of the Night Court. Prodigal daughters! Between December, 1908, and December, 1909, no less than five thousand of them passed through the guarded door, under the blaze of the electric lights. There is never an hour, from nine at night until three in the morning, when the prisoners' bench in Jefferson Market Court is without its full quota of women. Old — prematurely old, and young — pitifully young; white and brown; fair and faded; sad and cynical; starved and prosper-

MISS MAUDE E. MINER

Head of Waverley House, where erring girls are cared for.

ous; rag-draped and satin-bedecked; together they wait their turn at judgment.

Quietly moving back and forth before the prisoners' bench you see a woman, tall, graceful, black-gowned. She is the salaried probation officer, modern substitute for the old-time volunteer mission worker. The probation officer's serious blue eyes burn with no missionary zeal. There is no spark of sentimental pity in the keen gaze she turns on each new arrival.

When the bench is full of women the judge turns to her to inquire: "Anybody there you want, Miss Miner?"

Miss Miner usually shakes her head. She diagnoses her cases like a physician, and she wastes no time on incurables.

Once in a while, perhaps several times in the course of a night, Miss Miner touches a girl on the arm. At once the girl rises and follows the probation officer into an adjoining room. If she is what she appears, young in evil, if she has a story which rings true, a story of poverty and misfortune, rather than of depravity,

she goes not back to the prisoners' bench. When her turn at judgment comes Miss Miner stands beside her, and in a low voice meant only for the judge, she tells the facts. The girl weeps as she listens. To hear one's troubles told is sometimes more terrible than to endure them.

Court adjourns at three in the morning, and this girl, with the others — if others have been claimed by the probation officer — goes out into the empty street, under the light of the tall tower, whose clock has begun all over again its monotonous race toward midnight. No policeman accompanies the group. The girls are under no manner of duress. They have promised to go home with Miss Miner, and they go. The night's adventure, entered into with dread, with callous indifference, or with thoughtless mirth, ends in a quiet bedroom and a pillow wet with tears.

Waverley House, as Miss Miner's home is known, has sheltered, during the past year, over three hundred girls. Out of that number

IN THE NIGHT COURT, NEW YORK

When the girl comes before the judge, Miss Miner stands beside her and tells the facts.

one hundred and nineteen have returned to their homes, or are earning a living at useful work.

One hundred and nineteen saved out of five thousand prodigals! In point of numbers this is a melancholy showing, but in comparison with other efforts at rescue work it is decidedly encouraging.

Nothing quite like Waverley House has appeared in other American cities, but it is a type of detention home for girls which is developing logically out of the probation system. Delinquent girls under sixteen are now considered, in all enlightened communities, subjects for the Juvenile Court. They are hardly ever associated with older delinquents. But a girl over sixteen is likely to be committed to prison, and may be locked in cells with criminal and abandoned women of the lowest order. Waverley House is the first practical protest against this stupid and evil-encouraging policy.

The house, which stands a few blocks distant from the Night Court, was established and is

maintained by the Probation Association of New York, consisting of the probation officers in many of the city courts, and of men and women interested in philanthropy and social reform. The District Attorney of New York County, Charles S. Whitman, is president of the Association, Maude E. Miner is its secretary, Mrs. Russell Sage, Miss Anne Morgan, Miss Mary Dreier, president of the New York Women's Trade Union League, Mrs. Richard Aldrich, formerly president of the Women's Municipal League, Andrew Carnegie, Edward T. Devine, head of New York's organized charities, Homer Folks, and Fulton Cutting are among the supporters of Waverley House. Miss Stella Miner is the capable and sympathetic superintendent of the house.

The place is in no sense a reformatory. It is an experiment station, a laboratory where the gravest and most baffling of all the diseases which beset society is being studied. Girls arrested for moral delinquency and paroled to probation officers are taken to Waverley

House, where they remain, under closest study and searching inquiry, until the best means of disposing of them is devised. Some are sent to their homes, some to hospitals, some to institutions, some placed on long probation.

Maude E. Miner, who declined a chair of mathematics in a woman's college to work in the Night Court, is one of an increasing number of women who are attempting a great task. They are trying to solve a problem which has baffled the minds of the wisest since civilization dawned. They have set themselves to combat an evil fate which every year overtakes countless thousands of young girls, dragging them down to misery, disease, and death. At the magnitude of the effort these women have undertaken one stands appalled. Will they ever reach the heart of the problem? Can they ever hope to do more than reclaim a few individuals? This much did the missionaries before them.

"We could reclaim fully seventy-five per

cent," declares Miss Miner, "if only we could find a way to begin nearer the beginning."

To begin the reform of any evil at the beginning, or near the beginning, instead of near the end is now regarded as an economy of effort. That is what educators are trying to do with juvenile delinquency; what physicians are doing with disease; what philanthropists are beginning to do with poverty.

Hardly any one has suggested that the social evil might have a cause, and that it might be possible to attack it at its source. Yet that any large number of girls enter upon such a horrible career, willingly, voluntarily, is unbelievable to one who knows anything of the facts. There must be strong forces at work on these girls, forces they find themselves entirely powerless to resist.

Miss Miner and her fellow probation officers are the visible signs of a very important movement among women to discover what these forces are. Meager, indeed, are the facts at hand. We have had, and we still have, in cities

east and west, committees and societies and law and order leagues earnestly engaged in "stamping out" the evil. It is like trying to stamp out a fire constantly fed with inflammables and fanned by a strong gale. The protests of most of these leagues amount to little more than vain clamor against a thing which is not even distantly comprehended.

The *personnel* of these agencies organized to "stamp out" the evil differs little in the various cities. It is largely if not wholly masculine in character, and the evil is usually dealt with from the point of view of religion and morals. Women, when they appear in the matter at all, figure as missionaries, "prison angels," and the like. As evangelists to sinners women have been permitted to associate with their fallen sisters without losing caste. Likewise, when elderly enough, they have been allowed to serve on governing boards of "homes" and "refuges." Their activities were limited to rescue work. They might extend a hand to a repentant Magdalene. A Phryne they must not even

be aware of. In other words, this evil as a subject of investigation and intelligent discussion among women was absolutely prohibited. It has ever been their Great Taboo.

Nevertheless, when eight million women, in practically every civilized country in the world, organized themselves into an International Council of Women, and began their remarkable survey of the social order in which they live, one of their first acts was to break the Great Taboo.

At early congresses of the International Council Miss Sadie American, Mrs. Kate Waller Barrett, Mrs. Elizabeth Grannis, among American delegates, Miss Elizabeth Janes of England, Miss Elizabeth Gad of Denmark, Dr. Agnes Bluhm of Germany, and others interested in the moral welfare of girls, urged upon the Council action against the "White Slave" traffic. No extensive argument was required to convince the members of the Council that the "White Slave" traffic and the whole subject of the moral degradation of women was

MISS SADIE AMERICAN

Prominent in the work of fighting the White Slave traffic.

a social phenomenon too long neglected by women.

These women declared with refreshing candor that it was about time that the social evil was dealt with intelligently, and if it was to be dealt with intelligently women must do the work. The fussy old gentlemen with white side whiskers and silk-stocking reformers and the other well meaning amateurs, who are engaged in "stamping out" the evil, deserve to be set aside. In their places the women propose to install social experts who shall deal scientifically with the problem.

The double standard of morals, accepted in fact if not in principle, in every community, and so rigidly applied that good women are actually forbidden to have any knowledge of their fallen sisters, was for the first time repudiated by a body of organized women. The arguments on which the double standard of morals is based was, for the first time, seriously scrutinized by women of intelligence and social importance. The desirability of the descent of

property in legal paternal line seemed to these women a good enough reason for applying a rigid standard of morals to women. But they found reasons infinitely greater why the same rigid standard should be applied to men.

The International Council of Women and women's organizations in every country number among their members and delegates women physicians, and through these physicians they have been able to consider the social evil from an altogether new point of view. Certain very ugly facts, which touch the home and which intimately concern motherhood and the welfare of children, were brought forth — facts concerning infantile blindness, almost one-third of which is caused by excesses on the part of the fathers; facts concerning certain forms of ill health in married women, and the increase of sterility due to the spread of specific diseases among men. The horrible results to innocent women and children of these maladies, and their frightful prevalence, — seventy-five per

cent of city men, according to reliable authority, being affected, — aroused in the women a sentiment of indignation and revolt. The International Council of Women put itself on record as protesting against the responsibility laid upon women, the unassisted task of preserving the purity of the race.

In the United States, women's clubs, women's societies, women's medical associations, special committees of women in many cities have courageously undertaken the study of this problem, intending by means of investigation and publicity to lay bare its sources and seek its remedy.

The sources of the evil are about the only phase of the problem which has never been adequately examined. It is true that we have suspected that the unsteady and ill-adjusted economic position of women furnished some explanation for its existence, but even now our information is vague and unsatisfactory.

A number of years ago, in 1888 to be exact, the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics

made an interesting investigation. This was an effort to determine how far the entrance of women into the industrial world, usually under the disadvantage of low wages, was contributing to profligacy. The bureau gathered statistics of the previous occupations of nearly four thousand fallen women in twenty-eight American cities.

Of these unfortunates over eight hundred had worked in low-waged trades such as paper-box making, millinery, laundry work, rope and cordage making, cigar and cigarette making, candy packing, textile factory and shoe factory work.

About five hundred women had been garment workers, dressmakers, and seamstresses, but how far these were skilled or unskilled was not stated.

The department store, at that time little more than a sweat shop so far as wages and long hours of work were concerned, contributed one hundred and sixteen recruits to the list.

On the whole, these groups were what the investigators had expected to find.

There were two other large groups of prodigals, and these were entirely unexpected by the investigators. Of the 3,866 girls examined 1,236, or nearly thirty-two per cent, reported no previous occupation. The next largest group, 1,115, or nearly thirty per cent, had been domestic servants. The largest group of all had gone straight from their homes into lives of evil. A group nearly as large had gone directly from that occupation which is constantly urged upon women as the safest and most suitable means of earning their living — housework.

Now you may, if you want to drop the thing out of your mind as something too disagreeable to think about, infer from this that at least sixty-two per cent of those 3,866 women deserved their fate. Some of them were too lazy to work, and the rest preferred a life of soiled luxury to one of honest toil in somebody's nice kitchen. Apparently this was the

view taken by the Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics, because it never carried the investigation any farther. It never tried to find out *why* so many girls left their homes to enter evil lives. It never tried to find out *why* housework was a trade dangerous to morals.

Fortunately it did occur to the women's organizations to examine the facts a little more carefully. In this article I am going to take you over some of the ground they have covered and show you where their investigations have led them.

South Chicago is a fairly good place to begin. Its ugliness and forlornness can be matched in the factory section of almost any large city. South Chicago is dominated by its steel mills, — enormous drab structures, whose every crevice leaks quivering heat and whose towering chimneys belch forth unceasingly a pall of ashes and black smoke. The steel workers and their families live as a rule in two and three family houses, built of wood,

generally unpainted, and always dismally utilitarian as to architectural details.

In South Chicago, four years ago, there was not such a thing as a park, or a playground, or a recreation center. One lone social settlement was just seeking a home for itself. There were public schools, quite imposing buildings. But these were closed and locked and shuttered for the day as soon as the classes were dismissed.

In a certain neighborhood of South Chicago there lived a number of young girls, healthy, high-spirited, and full of that joy of life which always must be fed — if not with wholesome food, then husks. For parents these girls had fathers who worked twelve hours a day in the steel mills and came home at night half dead from lack of rest and sleep; and mothers who toiled equally long hours in the kitchen or over the washtub and were too weary to know or care what the girls did after school. For social opportunity the girls had "going downtown." Perhaps you know what that

means. It means trooping up and down the main street in lively groups, lingering near a saloon where a phonograph is bawling forth a cheerful air, visiting a nickel theater, or looking on at a street accident or a fight.

About this time the panic of 1907 descended suddenly on South Chicago and turned out of the steel mills hundreds of boys and men. Some of these were mere lads, sixteen to eighteen years old. They, too, went "downtown." There was no other place for them to go.

As a plain matter of cause and effect, what kind of a moral situation would you expect to evolve out of these materials?

Eventually a woman probation officer descended on the neighborhood. Many of the girls whom she rescued from conditions not to be described in these pages were so young that their cases were tried in the Juvenile Court. Most of them went to rescue homes, reformatories, or hospitals. Some slipped away permanently, in all human probability to join the never-ceasing procession of prodigals.

This is what "no previous occupation" really means in nine cases out of ten. It means that the girl lived in a home which was no home at all, according to the ideals of you who read these pages.

Sometimes it was a cellar where the family slept on rags. Sometimes it was an attic where ten or twelve people herded in a space not large enough for four. Some of these homes were never warm in winter. In some there was hardly any furniture. But we need not turn to these extreme cases in order to show that in many thousands of American homes virtue and innocence are lost because no facilities for preserving them are possible.

Annie Donnelly's case will serve as further illustration. Annie Donnelly's father was a sober, decent man of forty, who drove a cab from twelve to fifteen hours every day in the year, Sundays and holidays included. Before the cab drivers' strike, a year or two ago, Donnelly's wages were fifteen dollars a week,

and the family lived in a four-room tenement, for which they paid $5.50 a week. You pay rent weekly to a tenement landlord. Since the strike wages are fourteen dollars a week for cab drivers, and this fall the Donnelly rent went up fifty cents a week.

The Donnelly tenement was a very desirable one, having but a single dark, windowless room, instead of two or three, like most New York tenements. There were three children younger than Annie, who was fourteen. The family of five made a fairly tight fit in four rooms. Nevertheless, when the rent went up to six dollars Mrs. Donnelly took a lodger. She had to or move and, remember, this was a desirable tenement because it had only one dark room.

One day the lodger asked Annie if she did not want to go to a dance. Annie did want to, but she knew very well that her mother would not allow her to go. Once a year the entire family, including the baby, attended the annual ball of the Coachman's Union, but that

was another thing. Annie was too young for dances her mother declared.

The Donnellys paid for and occupied three rooms, but they really lived in one room, the others being too filled with beds to be habitable except at night. The kitchen, the one living-room, was uncomfortably crowded at meal times. At no time was there any privacy. It was impossible for Annie to receive her girl friends in her home. Every bit of her social life had to be lived out of the house.

When the weather was warm she often stayed in the street, walking about with the other girls or sitting on a friend's doorstep, until ten or even eleven o'clock at night. Every one does the same in a crowded city neighborhood. There comes a time in a girl's life when this sort of thing becomes monotonous. The time came when Annie found sitting on the door-step and talking about nothing in particular entirely unbearable. So one balmy, inviting spring night she slipped away and went with the lodger to a dance.

The dance hall occupied a big, low-ceiled basement room in a building which was a combination of saloon and tenement house. In one of the front windows of the basement room was hung a gaudy placard: "The Johnny Sullivan Social Club."

The lodger paid no admission, but he deposited ten cents for a hat check, after which they went in. About thirty couples were swinging in a waltz, their forms indistinctly seen through the clouds of dust which followed them in broken swirls through air so thick that the electric lights were dimmed. Somewhere in the obscurity a piano did its noisiest best with a popular waltz tune.

In a few minutes Annie forgot her timidity, forgot the dust and the heat and the odor of stale beer, and was conscious only that the music was piercing, sweet, and that she was swinging in blissful time to it. When the waltz tune came to an end at last the dancers stopped, gasping with the heat, and swaying with the giddiness of the dance.

"Come along," said the lodger, "and have a beer." When Annie shook her head he exclaimed: "Aw, yuh have to. The Sullivans gets the room rent free, but the fellers upstairs has bar privileges, and yuh have to buy a beer off of 'em oncet in a while. They 've gotta get something out of it."

I do not know whether Annie yielded then or later. But ultimately she learned to drink beer for the benefit of philanthropists who furnish dance halls rent free, and also to quench a thirst rendered unbearable by heat and dust. They seldom open the windows in these places. Sometimes they even nail the windows down. A well-ventilated room means poor business at the bar.

Annie Donnelly became a dance-hall *habitué*. Not because she was viciously inclined; not because she was abnormal; but because she was decidedly normal in all her instincts and desires.

Besides, it is easy to get the dance-hall habit. At almost every dance invitations to other

dances are distributed with a lavish hand. These invitations, on cheap printed cards, are scattered broadcast over chairs and benches, on the floors, and even on the bar itself. They are locally known as "throw-aways." Here are a few specimens, from which you may form an idea of the quality of dance halls, and the kind of people — almost the only kind of people — who offer pleasure to the starved hearts of girls like Annie Donnelly. These are actual invitations picked up in an East Side dance hall by the head worker of the New York College Settlement:

> *"Second annual reception and ball, given by Jibo and Jack, at New Starlight Hall, 143 Suffolk Street, December 25. Music by our favorite. Gents ticket 25 cents, Ladies 15 cents."*

> *"Don't miss the ball given by Joe the Greaser, and Sam Rosenstock, at Odd Fellows' Hall, January 29th."*

"See the Devil Dance at the Reception and Ball given by Max Pascal and Little Whity, at Tutonia Hall, Tuesday evening, November 20th."

"Reception and Ball given by two well known friends, Max Turk and Sam Lande, better known as Mechuch, at Appollo Hall, Chrystmas night. Floor manager, Young Louis. Ticket admit one 25 cents."

In addition to these private affairs which are arranged purely for the profit of "Jibo and Jack" and their kind, men who make a living in this and in yet more unspeakable ways, there are hundreds of saloon dance halls, not only in New York, but in other cities. These are simply annexes to drinking places, and people are not welcome there unless they drink. No admission is charged.

There are also numberless dancing academies. Dancing lessons are given four nights in the week, as a rule, and the dancing public

buys admission the other three nights and on Sunday afternoons. Some dancing academies, even in tenement house quarters, are reputable institutions, but to most of them the lowest of the low, both men and women, resort. There, as in the dance halls, the "White Slaver" plies his trade, and the destroyer of womanliness lays his nets.

Annie Donnelly soon learned the ways of all these places. She learned to "spiel." You spiel by holding hands with your partner at arms' length, and whirling round and round at the highest possible speed. The girl's skirts are blown immodestly high, which is a detail. The effect of the spiel is a species of drunkenness which creates an instant demand for liquor, and a temporary recklessness of the possible results of strong drink.

Annie also learned to dance what is known as the "half time," or the "part time" waltz. This is a dance accompanied by a swaying and contorting of the hips, most indecent in its suggestion. It is really a very primitive form

of the dance, and probably goes back to the pagan harvest and bacchic festivals. You may see traces of it in certain crude peasant dances in out-of-the-way corners of Europe. Now they teach it to immigrant girls in New York dancing academies and dance halls, and tell the girls that it is the *American* fashion of waltzing.

Annie Donnelly's destruction was accomplished in less than a year. It was the more rapid because of the really superior character of her home. There was nothing the matter with that home except that it was too crowded for the family to stay in it. Father and mother were respectable, hard-working people, and after Annie's first real misadventure, into which she fell almost unwittingly, she was afraid to go home.

The dance hall, as we have permitted it to exist, practically unregulated, has become a veritable forcing house of vice and crime in every city in the United States. It is a straight chute down which, every year, thou-

sands of girls descend to the way of the prodigal. No one has counted their number. All we know of the unclassed is that they exist, apparently in ever-increasing masses.

It was estimated in Chicago, not long ago, that there were about six thousand unfortunate women known to the police, and something like twenty thousand who managed to avoid actual collision with the law. That is, the latter lived quietly and plied their trade on the street so unostentatiously that they were seldom arrested. How many of these unfortunates reached the streets through the dance hall is impossible to know — we only know that it constantly recruits the ranks of the unclassed.

The dance hall may be in the rear of a saloon, or over a saloon; it may occupy a vacant store building, or a large loft. Somewhere in its immediate vicinity there is a saloon. A dance lasts about five minutes, and the interval between dances is from ten to twenty minutes. Waiters circle among the

A Typical Dance Hall

Waiters circle among the dancers, importuning them to drink.

dancers, importuning them to drink. The dance hall without a bar, or some source of liquid supply, does not often exist, except as it has been established by social workers to offset the influence of the commercial dance hall.

Some dance halls are small and wretchedly lighted. Others are large and pretentious. Some of them have direct connections with Raines Law hotels and their prototypes. Of hardly a single dance hall can a good word be said. They are almost entirely in the hands of the element lowest in society, in business, and in politics.

From the old-fashioned German family picnic park to Coney Island in New York, Revere Beach in Boston, The White City in Chicago, Savin Rock in New Haven, and their like, is a far cry.

Some of these summer parks try to keep their amusements clean and decent, and some, notably Euclid Park, Cleveland, succeed. But drink and often worse evils are characteristic

of most of them. There are parts of Coney Island where no beer is sold, where the vaudeville and the moving pictures are clean and wholesome, where dancing is orderly. But the nearest side street has its "tough joint." The same thing is true of the big summer resorts of other cities.

The dance hall, both winter and summer types, have had a deteriorating effect upon the old-fashioned dancing academy. Formerly these were respectable establishments where people paid for dancing lessons. Now they are a *mélange* of dancing classes and public entertainments. The dancing masters, unable to compete with the dance hall proprietors, have been obliged to transfer many of the dance hall features to their establishments.

Oddly enough it is rather an unusual thing for a girl to be escorted to a dance in any kind of a dance hall. The girls go alone, with a friend, or with a group of girls. The exceptional girl, who is attended by a man, must dance with him, or if she accepts another part-

ner, she must ask his permission. An escort is deemed a somewhat doubtful advantage. Those who go unattended are always sure of partners. Often they meet "fellows" they know, or have seen on the streets. Introductions are not necessary. Even if a girl is unacquainted with any "fellows," if she possesses slight attractions, she is still sure of partners.

The amount of money spent by working girls for dance-hall admissions is considerable. A girl receiving six or seven dollars a week in wages thinks nothing of reserving from fifty cents to a dollar for dancing.

In going about among the dance halls one is struck with the number of black-gowned girls. The black gown might almost be called the mark of the dance-hall *habitué*, the girl who is dance mad and who spends all her evenings going from one resort to another. She wears black because light evening gowns soil too rapidly for a meager purse to renew.

An indispensable feature of the dancing academy is the "spieler." This is a young man

whose strongest recommendation is that he is a skilled and untiring dancer. The business of the spieler is to look after the wall-flowers. He seeks the girl who sits alone against the wall; he dances with her and brings other partners to her. It would not do for a place to get the reputation of slowness. The girls go back to those dance halls where they have had the best time.

The spieler is not uncommonly a worthless fellow; sometimes he is a sinister creature, who lives on the earnings of unfortunate girls. The dance hall, and especially the dancing academy, because of the youth of many of its patrons, is a rich harvest field for men of this type.

Beginning with the saloon dance hall, unquestionably the most brutally evil type, and ending with the dancing academy, where some pretense of chaperonage is made, the dance hall is a vicious institution. It is vicious because it takes the most natural of all human instincts, the desire of men and women to associate to-

gether, and distorts that instinct into evil. The boy and girl of the tenement-dwelling classes, especially where the foreign element is strong, do not share their pleasures in the normal, healthy fashion of other young people. The position of the women of this class is not very high. Men do not treat her as an equal. They woo her for a wife. In the same manner the boy does not play with the girl. The relations between young people very readily degenerate. The dance hall, with its curse of drink, its lack of chaperonage and of reasonable discipline, helps this along its downward course.

Sadie Greenbaum, as I will call her, was an exceptionally attractive young Jewish girl of fifteen when I first knew her. Although not remarkably bright in school she was industrious, and aspired to be a stenographer. She was not destined to realize her ambition. As soon as she finished grammar school she was served, so to speak, with her working papers. The family needed additional income, not to meet actual living expenses, for the Green-

baums were not acutely poor, but in order that the only son of the family might go to college. Max was seventeen, a selfish, overbearing prig of a boy, fully persuaded of his superiority over his mother and sisters, and entirely willing that the family should toil unceasingly for his advancement.

Sadie accepted the situation meekly, and sought work in a muslin underwear factory. At eighteen she was earning seven dollars a week as a skilled operator on a tucking machine. She sat down to her work every morning at eight o'clock, and for four hours watched with straining eyes a tucking foot which carried eight needles and gathered long strips of muslin into eight fine tucks, at the rate of four thousand stitches a minute. The needles, mere flickering flashes of white light above the cloth, had to be watched incessantly lest a thread break and spoil the continuity of a tuck. When you are on piece wages you do not relish stopping the machine and doing over a yard or two of work.

So Sadie watched the needle assiduously, and ignored the fact that her head ached pretty regularly, and she was generally too weary when lunch time came to enjoy the black bread and pickles which, with a cup of strong tea, made her noon meal. After lunch she again sat down to her machine and watched the needles gallop over the cloth.

At the end of each year Sadie Greenbaum had produced for the good of the community *four miles* of tucked muslin. In return, the community had rendered her back something less than three hundred dollars, for the muslin underwear trade has its dull seasons, and you do not earn seven dollars every week in the year.

Each week Sadie handed her pay envelope unopened to her mother. The mother bought all Sadie's clothes and gave her food and shelter. Consequently, Sadie's unceasing vigil of the needle paid for her existence and purchased also the proud consciousness of an older brother who would one day own a doctor's buggy and a social position.

The one joy of this girl's life, in fact all the real life she lived, was dancing. Regularly every Saturday night Sadie and a girl friend, Rosie by name, put on their best clothes and betook themselves to Silver's Casino, a huge dance hall with small rooms adjoining, where food and much drink were to be had.

There was a good floor at Silver's and a brass band to dance to. It was great! The girls never lacked partners, and they made some very agreeable acquaintances.

In the dressing room, between dances, all the girls exchanged conversation, views on fashions, confidences about the young men and other gossip. Some of the girls were nice and some, it must be admitted, were "tough." What was the difference? The tough girls, with their daring humor, their cigarettes, their easy manners, and their amazingly smart clothes, furnished a sort of spice to the affair.

Sadie and Rosie sometimes discussed the tough girls, and the conversation nearly always ended with one remarking: "Well, if they

don't get anything else out of livin', look at the clothes they put on their backs."

Perhaps you can understand that longing for pretty gowns, perhaps you can even sympathize with it. Of course, if you have a number of other resources, you can keep the dress hunger in its proper place. But if you have nothing in your existence but a machine — at which you toil for others' benefit —

Sadie and Rosie continued to spend their Saturday evenings and their Sunday evenings at Silver's Casino. At first they went home together promptly at midnight. After midnight these casino dance halls change their character. Often professional "pace makers" are introduced, men and women of the lowest class, who are paid to inspire the other dancers to lewd conduct. These wretched people are immodestly clothed, and they perform immodest or very tough dances. They are usually known as "Twisters," a descriptive title. When they make their appearance the self-respecting dancers go home, and a much looser

element comes in. The pace becomes a rapid one. Manners are free, talk is coarse, laughter is incessant. The bar does a lively business. The dancing and the revels go on until daylight.

The first time Sadie and Rosie allowed themselves to be persuaded to stay at Silver's after midnight they were rather horrified by the abandoned character of the dancing, the reckless drinking, and the fighting which resulted in several men being thrown out. The second time they were not quite so horrified, but they decided not to stay so late another time. Then came a great social event, the annual "mask and shadow dance" of a local political organization. Sadie and Rosie attended.

A "mask and shadow dance" is as important a function to girls of Sadie's and Rosie's class as a cotillion is to girls of your class. Such affairs are possible only in large dance halls, and to do them impressively costs the proprietor some money. The guests rent costumes and masks and appear in very gala

fashion indeed. They dance in the rays of all kinds of colored lights thrown upon them from upper galleries. During part of a waltz the dancers are bathed in rose-colored lights, which change suddenly to purple, a blue, or a green. Some very weird effects are made, the lights being so manipulated that the dancers' shadows are thrown, greatly magnified, on walls and floor. At intervals a rain of bright-colored confetti pours down from above. The scene becomes bacchanalian. Color, light, music, confetti, the dance, together combine to produce an intense and voluptuous intoxication which the revelers deepen with drink.

The events of the latter part of that night were very vague in Sadie's memory when she awoke late the next morning. She remembered that she had tolerated familiarities which had been foreign to her experience heretofore, and that she had been led home by some friendly soul, at daylight, almost helpless from liquor.

Frightened, haunted by half-ashamed mem-

ories of that dance, Sadie spoiled a good bit of her work on Monday morning. The forewoman descended on her with a torrent of coarse abuse, whereupon Sadie rose suddenly from her machine, and in a burst of hysterical profanity and tears rushed out of the factory, vowing never to return. There was only one course, she decided, for her to take, and she took it.

"Sadie, why did you do it?" wailed Rosie the next time they met.

"It 's better than the factory," said Sadie.

Tucking muslin underwear is dull work, but it is, in most ways, a more agreeable task than icing cakes in a St. Louis biscuit factory. All day Edna M—— stood over a tank filled with thick chocolate icing. The table beside Edna's tank was kept constantly supplied with freshly baked "lady-fingers," and these in delicate handfuls Edna seized and plunged into the hot ooze of the chocolate. Her arms, up to the elbows, went into the black stuff, over and over again all day. At noon, over their lunch, the

girls talked of their recreations, their clothes, their " fellows."

Edna had not very much to contribute to the girls' stories of gayety and adventure. She led a quieter existence than most of the other girls, although her leanings were toward lively pleasures. She was engaged to a young man who worked in a foundry and who was steady and perhaps rather too serious. He was very jealous of Edna and exacted a stern degree of fidelity of her.

Before her engagement Edna had gone to a decent dancing school and dearly loved the dance. Now she was not permitted to dance with any one but her prospective husband. The bright talk at the noon hour made Edna feel that she was a very poor sport.

The young man's work in the foundry alternated weekly between day and night duty. It occurred to Edna that her young man could not possibly know what she did with those evenings he remained in the foundry. If she chose to go with a group of girls to a dance hall,

what harm? The long years of married life stretched themselves out somewhat drably to Edna. She decided to have a good time beforehand.

This girl from now on literally lived a double life. Evenings of the weeks her young man was free from the foundry, she spent at home with him, placidly playing cards, reading aloud, or talking. On the other evenings she danced, madly, incessantly. Her mother thought she spent the evenings with her girl friends. The dancing, plus the deceit, soon had its effect on Edna. She began to visit livelier and livelier resorts, curious to see all phases of pleasure.

Suspicion entered into the mind of her affianced. He questioned her; she lied, and he was unconvinced. A night or two later the young man stayed away from the foundry and followed Edna to a suburban resort. She went, as usual, with a group of girls, but their men were waiting for them near the door of the open-air dancing pavilion. Standing just outside, the angry lover watched the girl " spiel "

round and round with a man of doubtful respectability. Soon she joined a noisy, beer-drinking group at one of the tables, and her behavior grew more and more reckless. Finally, amid laughter, she and another girl performed a suggestive dance together.

Walking swiftly up to her, the outraged foundryman grasped her by the shoulder, called her a name she did not yet deserve, and threw her violently to the floor. A terrific fight followed, and the police soon cleared the place.

Edna did not dare go home. An over-rigid standard of morals, an over-repressive policy, an over-righteous judgment, plus a mother ignorant of the facts of life, plus a girl's longing for joy — the sum of these equaled ruin in Edna's case.

CHAPTER VIII

WOMAN'S HELPING HAND TO THE PRODIGAL DAUGHTER

Annie, Sadie, Edna, thousands of girls like them, girls of whom almost identical stories might be told, help to swell the long procession of prodigals every succeeding year. They joined that procession ignorantly because they thirsted for pleasure. Their days were without interest, their minds were unfurnished with any resources. At fourteen most of them left public school. Reading and writing are about as much intellectual accomplishments as the school gives them, and the work waiting for them in factory, mill, or department store is rarely of a character to increase their intelligence.

Ask a girl, "Why do you go to the dance hall? Why don't you stay home evenings?"

Nine times in ten her answer will be: "What should I do with myself, sitting home and twirling my fingers?"

If you suggest reading, she will reply: "You can't be reading all the time." In other words, there is no intellectual impulse, but instead an instinct for action.

The crowded tenement, the city slum, an oppressive system of ill-paid labor, these are evils which a gradually developing social conscience must one day eliminate. Their tenure will not be disturbed to-day, to-morrow, or next day. Their evil influence can be offset, in some measure, by a recognition on the part of the community of a debt, — a debt to youth.

The joy of life, inherent in every young creature, including the young human creature, seeks expression in play, in merriment, and will not be denied.

The oldest, the most persistent, the most attractive, the most satisfying expression of the joy of life is the dance. Other forms of recreation come in for brief periods, but their

vogue is always transitory. The roller skating craze, for example, waxed, waned, and disappeared. Moving pictures and the nickelodeon have had their day, and are now passing. The charm, the passion, the lure of the dance remains perennial. It never wholly disappears. It always returns.

In New York City alone there are three hundred saloon dance halls. Three hundred dens of evil where every night in the year gallons of liquid damnation are forced down the throats of unwilling drinkers! Where the bodies and souls of thousands of girls are annually destroyed, because the young are irresistibly drawn toward joy, and because we, all of us, good people, busy people, indifferent people, unseeing people, have permitted joy to become commercialized, have turned it into a commodity to be used for money profit by the worst elements in society. Could a more inverted scheme of things have been devised in a madhouse?

New York is by no means unique. Every

city has its dance hall problem; every small town its girl and boy problem; every country-side its tragedy of the girl who, for relief from monotony, goes to the city and never returns.

It is strange that nowhere, until lately, in city, town, or country, has it occurred to any one that the community owed anything to this insatiable thirst for joy.

Consider, for instance, the age-long indifference of the oldest of all guardians of virtue, the Christian Church. To the demand for joy the evangelical church has returned the stern reply: "To play cards, to go to the theater, above all, to dance, is wicked." The Methodist Church, for one, has this baleful theory written in its book of discipline, and persistent efforts on the part of enlightened clergy and lay members have utterly failed to expurgate it. The Catholic, Episcopalian, and Lutheran churches utter no such strictures, but in effect they defend the theory that joy, if not in itself an evil, at least is no necessity of life.

To meet the growing social discontent, the increasing indifference to old forms of religion, the open dissatisfaction with religious organizations which had degenerated into clubs for rich men, there was developed some years ago in America the "institutional church." This was an honest effort to give to church members, and to those likely to become church members, opportunity for social and intellectual diversion. Parish houses and settlements were established, and these were furnished with splendid gymnasiums, club rooms, committee rooms, auditoriums for concerts and lectures, kitchens for cooking lessons, and provision besides for basketry, sewing, and embroidery classes. These are all good, and so are the numberless reading, debating, and study clubs good, as far as they go. But what a pitifully short way they go! They have built up congregations somewhat, but they have made not the slightest impression on the big social problem. The reason is plain. The appeal of the institutional church is too in-

tellectual. It reaches only that portion of the masses who stand least in need of social opportunity.

To this accusation the church, man instituted and man controlled since the beginning of the Christian Era, replies that it does all that can be done for the uplift of humanity. That the church seems to be losing its hold on the masses of people is attributed to a general drift of degenerate humanity towards atheism and unbelief.

The people, the great world of people, — what a field for the church to work in, if it only chose! The great obstacle is that the church (leaving out the institutional church), on Sunday a vital, living force, is content to exist all the other days in the week merely as a building. Six days and more than half six evenings in the week the churches stand empty and deserted. Simply from the point of view of material economy this waste in church property, reduced to dollars and cents, would appear deplorable. From the point of view of social

economy, reduced to terms of humanity, the waste is heartbreaking.

What would happen if something should loose those churches, or, at any rate, their big Sunday-school rooms and their ample basements from this icy exclusiveness, this week-day aloofness from humanity? Can you picture them at night, streaming with light, gay with music, filled with dancing crowds? — not crowds from homes of wealth and comfort, but crowds from streets and byways; crowds for which, at present, the underworld spreads its nets? The great mass of the people, packed in dreary tenements, slaves of machinery by day, slaves of their own starved souls by night, must go somewhere for relaxation and forgetfulness. What would happen if the church should invite them, not to pray but to play?

Some of the results might be a decrease in vice, in drinking, gambling, and misery. At least we may infer as much from the success of the occasional experiments which have been tried. We have a few examples to prove that

human nature is not the low, brutish thing it has too often been described. It does not invariably choose wrong ways, but, on the contrary, when a choice between right ways and wrong ways is presented, the right is almost always preferred.

A year ago in Chicago there was witnessed a spectacle which, for utter brutality and blindness of heart, I hope never to see duplicated. Chicago had for some time been in the midst of a vigorous crusade against organized vice. Too long neglected by the authorities and the public, the so-called levee districts of the city had fallen into the hands of grafting police officials, who, working with the lowest of degraded of men, had created an open and most brazen vice syndicate. Without going into details, it is enough to say that conditions finally became so scandalous that all Chicago rose in horror and rebellion. The police department was thoroughly overhauled, and a new chief appointed who undertook in all earnestness to suppress the worst features of the system. He

had no new weapons it is true, and he probably had no notion that he could make any impression on the evil of prostitution. But he might have restored external decency and order, and he might possibly have prepared the way for some scientific examination of the problem. But a thing happened: one of those shocking blunders we too often let happen. The efforts of the chief of police were set back, because of that blunder, no one can tell how far. A new hysteria of vice and disorder dates from the hour the blunder was made.

In October of 1909 "Gypsy" Smith, a noted evangelical preacher of the itinerant order, was holding revival meetings in an armory on the South Side of Chicago. With mistaken zeal this man announced that he was going down into the South Side Levee and with one effort would reclaim every one of the wretched inhabitants. He invited his immense congregation to follow him there, and assist in the greatest crusade against vice the world had ever seen.

HELPING HAND TO PRODIGAL DAUGHTER

In Chicago, as in other cities, no procession or parade is allowed to march without permission from police headquarters. To the sorrow of all those who believed that reform had really begun, Chief of Police Steward issued a permit to "Gypsy" Smith. It is probable that the chief feared the effect of a refusal. To lift up the fallen has ever been one of the functions of religious bodies. Before issuing the permit, it is said that he used all his powers of persuasion against the parade.

By orders from headquarters every house in the district was closed, shuttered, and pitch dark on the night of the parade. Every door was locked, and the most complete silence reigned within. It was into a city of silence that the procession of nearly five thousand men, women, and young people of both sexes marched on that October midnight. In the glare of red fire and flaming torches, to the confused blare of many Salvation Army brass bands, the quavering of hymn tunes, including the classic, "Where Is My Wandering Boy

To-night," and the constant explosion of photographers' flashlights, the long procession stumbled and jostled its way through streets that gave back for answer darkness and silence.

But afterwards! The affair had been widely advertised, and it drew a throng of spectators, not only from every quarter of the city, but from every suburb and surrounding country town. Young men brought their sweethearts, their sisters, to see the "show." As "Gypsy" Smith's procession wound its noisy way out of the district, and back into the armory, this great mob of people surged into the streets pruriently eager to watch the awakening of the levee. It came. Lights flashed up in almost every house. The women appeared at the windows and even in the street. Saloon doors were flung open. The sound of pianos and phonographs rose above the clamor of the mob. Pandemonium broke loose as the crowds flung themselves into the saloons and other resorts. The police had to beat people back from the

doors with their clubs. A riot, an orgy, impossible to describe, impossible to forget, ensued. Many of those who took part in it had never been in such a district before.

This horrible scene somehow typified to my mind the whole blind, chaotic, senseless attitude which society has preserved toward the most baffling of all its problems. Nothing done to prevent the evil, because no one knew what to do. After the evil was an established fact, after the hearts of the victims were thoroughly hardened, after the last hope of return had perished, then a " vice crusade " — led by a man!

Another scene witnessed about the same time seems to me to typify the new attitude which society — led by women — is assuming towards its problem. It was in the large kindergarten room of one of the oldest of Chicago's social centers, — the Ely Bates Settlement. A group of little Italian girls, peasant clad in the red and green colors of their native land, swung around the room at a lively pace singing the

familiar "Santa Lucia." As the song ended the children suddenly broke into the maddest of dances, a tarantella. Led by a graceful young girl, one of the settlement workers, they danced with the joyous abandon of youthful spirits untrammeled, ending the dance with a chorus of happy laughter.

This was only one group of many hundreds in every quarter of Chicago, — in schools, settlements, kindergartens, and other centers, — who were rehearsing for the third of the annual play festivals given out of doors each year in Chicago. The festivals are held in the most spacious of the seventeen wonderful public gardens and playgrounds established of late throughout the city. Lasting all day, this annual carnival of play is shared by school children, working girls and boys, and young men and women. In the morning the children play and perform their costume dances. In the afternoon the fields are given up to athletic sports of older children, and in the evening young men and women, of all nationalities,

many wearing their old-world peasant dresses, revive the plays and the dances of their native lands. Tens of thousands view the beautiful spectacle, which each year excites more interest and assumes an added importance in the civic life of Chicago.

Each of the large parks in Chicago's system is provided with a municipal dance hall, spacious buildings with perfect floors, good light, and ventilation. Any group of young people are at liberty to secure a hall, rent free, for dancing parties. The city imposes only one condition, — that the dances be chaperoned by park supervisors. Beautifully decorated with growing plants from the park greenhouses these municipal dance halls are scenes of gayety almost every night in the year. Park restaurants in connection with the halls furnish good food at low prices. Of course no liquor is sold. Nobody wants it. This is proved by the fact that saloon dance halls in the neighborhood of the parks have been deserted by their old patrons.

Women have recognized the debt to youth and the joy of life, and they are preparing to pay it.

In this latest form of social service they have entered a battlefield where the powers of righteousness have ever fought a losing fight. Men have grappled with the social evil without success. They have labored to discover a substitute for the saloon, and they have failed. They have tried to suppress the dance hall and they have failed. They have made laws against evil resorts, and they have sent agents of the police to enforce their laws, but to no effect.

The failure of the men does not dishearten or discourage the women who have taken up the work. They believe that they have discovered an altogether new way in which to fight the social evil.

They propose to turn against it its own most powerful weapons. The joy of life is to be fed with proper food instead of poison. Girls and young men are to be offered a chance to

escape the nets stretched for them by the underworld. In many cities women's clubs and women's societies are establishing on a small scale amusement and recreation centers for young people. In New York Miss Virginia Potter, niece of the late Bishop Potter, and Miss Potter's colleagues in the Association of Working Girls' Clubs, have opened a public dance hall. The use of the large gymnasium of the Manhattan Trade School for Girls was secured, and every Saturday evening, from eight until eleven, young men and women come in and dance to excellent music, under the instruction, if they need it, of a skilled dancing-master. A small fee is charged, partly to defray expenses, and partly to attract a class of people who disdain philanthropy and settlements. The experiment is new, but it is undoubtedly successful. As many as two hundred couples have been admitted in an evening.

In half a dozen cities women's clubs and women's committees are at work on this matter of establishing amusement and recreation

centers for young people. In New York a Committee on Amusement and Vacation Resources of Working Girls has for its president a social worker of many years, Mrs. Charles M. Israels. Associated with the committee are many other well-known social economists, — women of wealth and influence who have given years to the service of working girls. The committee began its work by a scientific investigation into the dance halls of New York, the summer parks and picnic grounds in the outlying districts, and of the summer excursion boats which ply up and down the Hudson River and Long Island Sound. The revelations made by this investigation, carried on under the supervision of Miss Julia Schoenfeld, were terrible enough. They were made to appear still more terrible when it was known that men of the highest social and commercial standing were profiting hugely from the most vicious forms of amusement. A state senator is one of the largest stockholders in Coney Island resorts of bad character. An

ex-governor of the State controls a popular excursion boat, on which staterooms are rented by the hour, for immoral purposes no one can possibly doubt. The women of the committee submitted the findings of their investigators to the managers of these amusement places and to the directors of the steamboat lines, and in many instances reforms have been promised. The point is that a committee of women had to finance an investigation to show these business men the conditions which were adding to their wealth, and into which they had never even inquired.

Another investigation made by the committee revealed the meagerness of the provision made by churches, settlements, and business establishments for working girls' vacations. There are, in round numbers, four hundred thousand working women in Greater New York. Of these, something like three hundred thousand are unmarried girls between the ages of fourteen and thirty. In all, only 6,874 of these young toilers, who earn on an average

six dollars a week, are provided with vacation outings. They are usually given vacations, with or without pay, but they spend the idle time at Coney Island, on excursion boats, or in the dance hall.

Of the 1,257 churches and synagogues of New York, only six report organized vacation work for girls and women. Of the twenty or more large department stores, employing thousands of women, only three have vacation houses in the country. Of the hundred or more social settlements in New York only fifteen provide summer homes. There are several vacation societies which do good work with limited resources, but they are able to care for comparatively few. We have heard much of fresh air work for children, and we can afford to hear more. But that the fresh air work for young girls and women who toil long hours in factory and shop must be extended, this committee's investigation definitely establishes.

The first practical work of the committee,

after the investigation of amusement and recreation places, was a bill introduced into the State Legislature providing for the licensing and regulation of public dancing academies, prohibiting the sale of liquor in such establishments, and holding the proprietor responsible for indecent dancing and improper behavior.

Against the bitter opposition of the dancing academy proprietors the bill became a law and went into effect in September, 1909. Almost immediately it was challenged on constitutional grounds. The committee promptly introduced another bill, this one to regulate dance halls. This bill, which passed the legislature and is now a law, aims to wipe out the saloon dance hall absolutely, and so to regulate the sale of liquor in all dancing places that the drink evil will be cut down to a minimum. The license fee of fifty dollars a year will eliminate the lowest, cheapest resorts, and a rigid system of inspection will not only go far towards preserving good order, but will do away with the

wretchedly dirty, ill-smelling, unsanitary fire traps in which many halls are located. The dance-hall proprietor who encourages or even tolerates "tough" dancing, or who admits to the floor "White Slavers," procurers, or persons of open immorality, will be liable to forfeiture of his license.

The committee has done more than try to reform existing dance halls. It has taken steps to establish, in neighborhoods where evil resorts abound, attractive dance halls, where a decent standard of conduct is combined with all the best features of the evil places — good floors, lively music, bright lights. Two corporations have been organized for the maintenance, in various parts of the city, of model dance halls, and one hall has already been opened. The patrons of the model dance hall do not know that it is a social experiment paid for by a committee of women. It is run exactly like any public dancing place, only in an orderly fashion.

Every extension of use of public places,

schools, parks, piers, as recreation places for young people between fifteen and twenty is encouraged and supported by the committee. Already two public schools have organized dancing classes, and several settlements have thrown open their dances to the public where formerly they were attended only by settlement club members.

By helping working girls to find cheap vacation homes in the country, and by establishing vacation banks to help the girls save for their summer outings, the committee hopes to discourage some of the haphazard picnic-park dissipation. In summer many trades are slack, girls are idle, and out of sheer boredom they hang around the parks seeking amusement. It is only a theory, perhaps, but Mrs. Israels and the others on her committee believe that if many of these girls knew that a country vacation were within the possibilities, they would gladly save money towards it. At present the vacation facilities of working girls in large cities are small. In New York, where

at least three hundred thousand girls and women earn their bread, only about six thousand are helped to summer vacations in the country. What these women are doing now on a small scale, experimentally, will soon be adopted, as their children's playgrounds, their kindergartens, their vacation schools, and other enterprises have been adopted, by the municipalities. Their probation officers, long paid out of club treasuries, have already been transferred to many cities, east and west. Soon municipal dance halls, municipal athletic grounds, municipal amusement and recreation centers for all ages and all classes will be provided.

Already New York is preparing for such a campaign. The newly-appointed Parks Commissioner, Charles B. Stover, looking over his office force, dismissed one secretary whose function seemed largely ornamental, and diverted his salary of four thousand dollars to recreation purposes for young people. Commissioner Stover desires the appointment of

a city officer who shall be a Supervisor of Recreations, a man or a woman whose entire time shall be devoted to discovering where recreation parks, dancing pavilions, music, and other forms of pleasure are needed, and how they may be made to do the most good. A neighborhood that thirsts for concerts ought to have them. A community that desires to dance deserves a dance hall. In the long run, how infinitely better, how much more economical for the city to furnish these recreations, normally and decently conducted, than to bear the consequences of an order of things like the present one. The new order must come. It is the only way yet pointed out by which we may hope to close those other avenues, where the joy of youth is turned into a cup of trembling, and the dancing feet of girlhood are led into mires of shame.

CHAPTER IX

THE SERVANT IN HER HOUSE

According to the findings of the Massachusetts State Bureau of Labor Statistics, whose investigation into previous occupation of fallen women was described in a former chapter, domestic service is a dangerous trade. Of the 3,966 unfortunates who came under the examination of the Bureau's investigators, 1,115, or nearly thirty per cent, had been in domestic service. No other single industry furnished anything like this proportion.

From time to time reformatories and institutions dealing with delinquent women and girls examine the industrial status of their charges, always with results which agree with or even exceed the Massachusetts statistics. Bedford Reformatory, one of the two New York State institutions for delinquent women, in an examination of a group of one thousand women,

found four hundred and thirty general house-workers, twenty-four chamber-maids, thirteen nursemaids, eight cooks, and thirty-six waitresses. As some of the waitresses may have been restaurant workers, we will eliminate them. Even so, it will be seen that four hundred and seventy-five — nearly half of the Bedford women — had been servants.

In 1908 the Albion House of Refuge, New York, admitted one hundred and sixty-eight girls. Of these ninety-two were domestics, one was a lady's maid, and nine were nursemaids.

Of one hundred and twenty-seven girls in the Industrial School at Rochester, New York, in 1909, only fifty-one were wage earners. Of that number twenty-nine had worked in private homes as domestics. Bedford Reformatory receives mostly city girls; Albion and Rochester are supplied from small cities and country towns. It appears that domestic service is a dangerous trade in small communities as well as in large ones.

On the face of it, the facts are wonderfully puzzling. Domestic service is constantly urged upon women as the safest, healthiest, most normal profession in which they can possibly engage. Assuredly it seems to possess certain unique advantages. Domestic service is the only field of industry where the demand for workers permanently exceeds the supply. The nature of the work is essentially suited, by habit, tradition, and long experiment, to women. It offers economic independence within the shelter of the home.

Lastly, housework pays extremely well. A girl totally ignorant of the art of cooking, of any household art, one whose function is to clean, scrub, and assist her employer to prepare meals, can readily command ten dollars a month, with board. The same efficiency, or lack of efficiency, in a factory or department store would be worth about ten dollars a month, without board. The wages of a competent houseworker, in any part of the country, average over eighteen dollars a month.

Add to this about thirty dollars a month represented by food, lodging, light, and fire, and you will see that the competent houseworker's yearly income amounts to five hundred and seventy-six dollars. This is a higher average than the school-teacher or the stenographer receives; it is almost double the average wage of the shop girl, or the factory girl. It is, in fact, about as high as the usual income of the American workingman.

It is true that the social position of the domestic worker is lower than that of the teacher, stenographer, or factory worker. This undoubtedly affects the attractiveness of domestic service as a profession. But the lower social position is in itself no explanation of the high rate of immorality. At least there are no figures to prove that the rate of morality rises or falls with the social status of the individual.

In the contemplation of what is known as the "servant problem," I think we have been less scientific and more superficial than in any other social or industrial problem. For the increas-

ing dearth of domestic workers, for the lowered standard of efficiency, for the startling amount of immorality alleged to belong to the class, we have given every explanation except the right one.

At the bottom of the "servant problem" lies the fact that it exists in the privacy of the home. Now, we have reached a point of social consciousness where we allow that it is right to intrude some homes and ask questions for the good of the community. "How many children have you?" "Are they all in school?" "Does your husband drink?" We have not yet reached the point of sending agents to inquire: "How many servants do you keep; what are their hours of work, and what kind of sleeping accommodations do you furnish them?"

Some intelligent inquiry has been made into surface conditions. The Sociological Department of Vassar College, under Professor Lucy Maynard Salmon, during the years 1889 and 1890, made an exhaustive study of wages,

hours of work, difficulties, advantages, and disadvantages of domestic service. Professor Salmon's book, "Domestic Service," giving the results of the inquiry, is a classic on the subject. It deals, however, almost entirely with the ethical side of the problem, the social relation between mistress and maid. The relation between the worker and the industry is hardly examined at all.

A later inquiry into the servant problem was conducted in 1903, in half a dozen cities, by organizations of women which associated themselves for the purpose, under the name of the Intermunicipal Committee on Household Research.

The Woman's Municipal League of New York, the Educational and Industrial Union of Boston, the Housekeepers' Alliance, and the Civic Club of Philadelphia were the moving elements in the investigation. Co-operating with them were the College Settlements Association and the Association of Collegiate Alumnæ, which together established a scholar-

ship for the research. This research was most ably conducted by Miss Frances Kellor, a Vassar graduate, and nine assistant workers, all of whom were college women. The report of the investigation was published a year later in the volume "Out of Work." [1]

This investigation by organizations of educated and expert women was the first survey ever made of domestic service *as an industry,* the first scientific study of domestic workers *as an industrial group.* It was the first intelligent attempt to review housework as if it were a trade.

The most important conclusion of the investigators was that housework, domestic service, although carried on as a trade, is really no trade at all. The domestic worker is no more a part of modern industry than the Italian woman who finishes "pants" in a tenement, or the child who stays from school to fasten hooks and eyes on paper cards.

Do not let us make a mistake concerning the

[1] G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904.

underlying cause of the servant problem. Let us face the truth that we have two institutions which are back numbers in twentieth century civilization: two left-overs from a past-and-gone domestic system of industry. One of these is the tenement sweat shop, where women combine, or try to combine, manufacturing and housekeeping. The other is the private kitchen — the home — where the last stand of conservatism and tradition, the last lingering remnant of hand labor, continues to exist.

No woman who is free enough, strong enough, intelligent enough to seek work in a factory or shop, is ever found in a sweat shop or seen carrying bundles of coats to finish at home.

Exactly for the same reason the average American working woman shuns housework as a means of livelihood. You will find in every community a few women of intelligence who are naturally so domestic in their tastes and inclinations that they shrink from any work outside the home. Such women do adhere to

domestic service, but, broadly speaking, you behold in the servant group merely the siftings of the real industrial class.

In a tentative, halting sort of fashion we are learning to humanize the factory and shop. Factory workers, mill hands, department store clerks, have been granted legislation in almost every State of the Union, regulating hours of work, sanitary conditions, ventilation, and in some cases they have been given protection from dangerous machinery. In department stores they have been granted even certain special comforts, such as seats on which to rest while not actually working.

Of course, we have done no more than make a beginning in this matter of humanizing the factory and the shop. But we have made a beginning, and the movement toward securing better and juster and healthier conditions for workers in all the industries is bound to continue. So long as manufacturing was carried on in the home, no such protective legislation as workers now enjoy was dreamed of. We

had to wait until the workers came together in large groups before we could see their conditions and understand their needs.

Housework, because it is performed in isolation, because it is purely individual labor, has never been classed among the industries. It has rather been looked upon as a normal feminine function, a form of healthy exercise. No one has ever suggested to legislators that sweeping and beating rugs might be included among the dusty trades; that bending over steaming washtubs, and almost immediately afterwards going out into frosty air to hang the clothes, might be harmful to throat and lungs; that remaining within doors days at a time, as houseworkers almost invariably do, reacts on nerves and the entire physical structure; that steady service, if not actual labor, from six in the morning until nine and ten at night makes excessive demands on mind and body.

Such conditions exist because the workers are too weak, too inefficient, too unintelligent

to change them. Yet the demand for servants so far exceeds the supply that they are in a position, theoretically, to dictate the terms of their own employment. If they elected to demand pianos and private baths they could get them; that is, if instead of remaining isolated individuals they could form themselves into an industrial class, like plumbers, or bricklayers, or carpenters. Even as isolated individuals they are able to command a better money wage than more efficient workers, which proves how great is the need for their services.

The housekeeper clings to her archaic kitchen, firmly believing that if she gave it up, tried to replace it by any form of co-operative living, the pillars of society would crumble and the home pass out of existence. Yet so strong is her instinctive repugnance to the medieval system on which her household is conducted, that she shuns it, runs away from it whenever she can. Housekeeping as a business is a dark mystery to her. The mass of women in the

United States probably hold, almost as an article of religion, the theory that woman's place is in the home. But the woman who can organize and manage a home as her husband manages his business, systematically, profitably, professionally — well, how many such women do you know?

It would seem as if in the newer generations, the average housekeeper is not in the professional class at all. Usually she lacks professional training. If she was brought up in a well-to-do home where there were several servants, she knows literally nothing of cooking, or of any department of housekeeping. Even when she has had some instruction in household tasks, she almost never connects cooking with chemistry, food with dietetics, cleanliness with sanitation, buying with bookkeeping. She is an amateur. And she takes into her household to do work she herself is incapable of doing, another amateur, a woman who might, in many cases, do well under a capable commander, but who is hopelessly at sea when ex-

pected to evolve a system of housekeeping all by herself.

This irregular state of affairs in what should be a carefully studied, well-organized industry is reflected in the conditions commonly meted out to domestics. Take housing conditions, for example. Some housekeepers provide their servants with good beds; of course, not quite as good as other members of the household enjoy, but good enough. Some set aside pleasant, warm, well-furnished rooms for the servants. But Miss Kellor's investigators reported that it was common to find the only unheated room in a house or apartment set aside for the servant. They found great numbers of servants' rooms in basements, having no sunlight or heat.

At one home, where an investigator applied for a " place," the housekeeper complained that her last maid was untidy. Then she showed the applicant to the servant's room. This was a little den partitioned off from the coal bin!

In another place, the maid was required to

sleep on an ironing board placed over the bath-tub. In still another, the maid spent her night of rest on a mattress laid over the wash tubs in a basement. A bed for two servants, consisting of a thin mattress on the dining-room table, was also found.

Unventilated closets, rooms opening off from the kitchen, small and windowless, are very commonly provided in city flats. Even in spacious country homes the servants' rooms are considered matters of little importance.

"One woman," writes Miss Kellor, "planned her new three-story house with the attic windows so high that no one could see out of them. When the architect remonstrated she said: 'Oh, those are for the maids; I don't expect them to spend their time looking out.'"

I remember a young girl who waited on table at a woman's hotel where I made my home. One morning I sent this girl for more cream for my coffee. She was gone some time and I spoke to her a little impatiently when she re-

turned. She was silent for a moment, then she said: "Do you know that every time you send me to the pantry it means a walk of three and a half blocks? This dining-room and the kitchens and pantries are a block apart, and are separated by three flights of stairs. I have counted the distance there and back, and it is more than three blocks."

"But, Kittie," I said to her, "why do you work in a hotel, if it's like that? Why don't you take a place in a private family?"

"I've tried that," said the girl. "I had a place with the —— family," mentioning an historic name. "They had sickness in the family, and they stopped in town all summer. My room was up in the attic, with only a skylight for ventilation. During the day, except for the time I spent sitting on the area steps after nine o'clock, I was waiting on the cook in a hot kitchen. They let me out of the house once every two weeks. Here I have some freedom, at least."

I have told this story to dozens of domestics,

many of them from homes of wealth, and they agree that it is a common case. It is very rare, these girls say, to find a mistress who is willing to allow her maids to leave the house except on their days out. They concede certain hours of rest, it is true, but those hours must be spent within doors. "Why, if you went out I should be sure to need you," is the usual explanation.

Imagine a factory girl or a stenographer being required to remain after hours on the chance of being needed for extra work.

There is an aspect to this phase of the servant question which is generally overlooked by employers. This is an isolation from human intercourse to be found in no other industry. When the household employs only one servant the isolation is absolute. The girl is marooned, within full sight of others' happy life. Even when kindness is her portion she is an outsider from the family circle. Important as her function is in the life of the household, she is socially the lowest unit in it.

During the course of a great strike of mill

operatives in Fall River, Massachusetts, a few years ago, a considerable group of weaver and spinner girls were induced, by members of the Women's Trade Union League, to take up domestic service until the close of the strike. As the girls were in acute financial distress they agreed to try the experiment. These were mostly American or English girls, some of them above the average of intelligence and good sense.

Housework with its great variety of tasks made severe draughts on the strength of girls accustomed to using one set of muscles. The long hours and the confinement of domestic service affected nerves adjusted to a legal fifty-eight-hour week.

But the girls' real objection to housework was its loneliness. Hardly a single house in Boston, or the surrounding suburbs, where the girls found places, was provided with a servants' sitting room. There was absolutely no provision made for callers. For a servant is supposed not to have friends except on her

days out. On those occasions she is assumed to meet her friends on the street.

In England people recognize the fact that they have a servant class. Every house of any pretentions provides a servants' hall.

In the United States a sitting room for servants, even in millionaires' homes, is a rarity.

More than this, in many city households, especially in apartment households, the servants are prohibited from receiving their friends even in the kitchen. "Are we allowed to receive men visitors in the house?" chorused a group of girls, questioned in a fashionable employment agency. "Mostly our friends are not allowed to step inside the areaway while we are putting on our hats to go out."

There is no escaping the conclusion that a large part of the social evil, or that branch of it recruited every year from domestic service, is traceable to American methods of dealing with servants. The domestic, belonging, as a rule, to a weak and inefficient class, is literally

driven into paths where only strength and efficiency could possibly protect her from evil.

Servants share, in common with all other human beings, the necessity for human intercourse. They must have associates, friends, companions. If they cannot meet them in their homes they must seek them outside.

Walk through the large parks in any city, late in the evening, and observe the couples who occupy obscurely placed benches. You pity them for their immodest behavior in a public place. But most of them have no other place to meet. And it is not difficult to comprehend that clandestine appointments in dark corners as a rule do not conduce to proper behavior. Most of the women you see on park benches are domestic servants. Some of them, it is safe to assume, work in New York's Fifth Avenue, or in mansions on Chicago's Lake Shore Drive.

The social opportunity of the domestic worker is limited to the park bench, the cheap theater, the summer excursion boat, and the

AN UNTHOUGHT-OF PHASE OF THE SERVANT QUESTION

Lack of opportunity for sane social intercourse drives the domestic servant to the park bench and its result.

dance hall. Hardly ever does a settlement club admit a domestic to membership; rarely does a working girls' society or a Young Women's Christian Association circle bid her welcome. The Girls' Friendly Association of the Protestant Espiscopal Church is a notable exception to this rule.

In a large New England city, not long ago, a member of the Woman's Club proposed to establish a club especially for domestics, since no other class of women seemed willing to associate with them. The proposal was voted down. "For," said the women, "if they had a clubroom they would be sure to invite men, and immorality might result."

But there is no direct connection between a clubroom and immorality, whereas the park bench after dark and the dance hall and its almost invariable accompaniment of strong drink are positive dangers.

The housekeeper simply does not realize that her domestics are *girls,* exactly like other girls. They need social intercourse, they need

laughter and dancing and healthy pleasure just as other girls need them, as much as the young ladies of the household need them.

Perhaps they need them even more. The girl upstairs has mental resources which the girl downstairs lacks. The girl upstairs has the protection of family, friends, social position. The last is of greatest importance, because the woman without a social position has ever been regarded by a large class of men as fair game. The domestic worker sometimes finds this out within the shelter, the supposed shelter, of her employer's home.

Tolstoy's terrible story "Resurrection" has for its central anecdote in the opening chapter a court-room scene in which a judge is called upon to sentence to prison a woman for whose downfall he had, years before, been responsible. A somewhat similar story in real life, with a happier ending, was told me by the head of a woman's reformatory. This official received a visit from a lawyer, who told her with much emotion that he had, several days

ANOTHER SERIOUS CONTRIBUTION TO THE SOCIAL QUESTION

The servant girl has to seek relaxation in the promiscuous and debasing society of the excursion boat; she has nowhere else to go.

before, been present when a young girl was sentenced to a term in a reformatory.

"She lived in my home," said the man. "I believe that she was a good girl up to that time. My wife died, my home was given up, and of course I forgot that poor girl. She never made any claim on me. When I saw her there in court, among the dregs of humanity, her face showing what her life had become, I wanted to shoot myself. Now she is here, with a chance to get back her health and a right state of mind. Will you help me to make amends?"

The head of the reformatory rather doubted the man's sincerity at first. She feared that his repentance was superficial. She refused to allow him to see or to communicate with the girl, but she wrote him regularly of her progress. Several times in the course of the year the man visited the reformatory, and at the end of that period he was allowed to see the girl. This institution happens to be one of the few where a rational and a humane system of outdoor work is in vogue. The girl,

who a year back had been almost a physical wreck from drugs and the life of the streets, was again strong, healthy, and sane. The two forgave each other and were married.

If the position of the domestic, while living in the shelter of a family, is sometimes precarious, her situation, when out of a job, is often actually perilous.

If a girl has a home she goes to that home, and regards her temporary period of unemployment as a pleasant vacation. But in most cases, in cities, at any rate, few girls have homes of which they can avail themselves.

"In no city," says Miss Kellor's report, "are adequate provisions made for such homeless women, and their predicament is peculiarly acute, for their friends are often household workers who cannot extend the hospitality of their rooms."

I think I hear a chorus of protesting voices: "We don't have anything to do with the servant class you are describing. Our girls are respectable. They meet their friends at

church. They come to us from reputable employment offices, which would not deal with them if they were not all right."

Are you sure you know this? What, after all, do you really know about your servants? What do you know about the employment office that sent her to you? What do you know of the world inhabited by servants and the people who deal in servants? Can you not imagine that it might be different from the one you live in so safely and comfortably?

Are you willing to know the facts about the world, the underworld, from which the girl who cooks your food and takes care of your children is drawn? Do you care to know how a domestic spends the time between places, how she gets to your kitchen or nursery, the kind of homes she may have been in before she came to you? Make a little descent into that underworld with a girl whose experience is matched with those of many others.

Nellie B—— was an Irish girl, strong, pretty of face, and joyful of temperament.

The quiet Indiana town where she earned her living as a cook offered Nellie so little diversion that she determined to go to Chicago to live. She gave up her place, and with a month's wages in her pocket went to the city.

It was late in the afternoon when her train reached the station. Nellie alighted, bewildered and lonely. She had the address of an employment agency, furnished her by an acquaintance. Nellie slept that night, or rather tossed sleepless in the agency lodging house, on a dirty bed occupied by two women besides herself. In all her life she had never been inside such a filthy room, or heard such frightful conversation. Therefore next morning she gladly paid her exorbitant bill of one dollar and seventy-five cents, besides a fee of two dollars and a half for obtaining employment, and accepted the first place offered her.

The house she was taken to seemed to be conducted rather strangely. Meals were at unusual hours, and the household consisted largely of young women who received many

men callers. For about a week Nellie did her work unmolested. At the end of the week her mistress presented her with a low-necked satin dress and asked her if she would not like to assist in entertaining the men. Simple-minded Nellie had to have the nature of the entertaining explained to her, and she had great difficulty in leaving the house after she had declined the offer. She had hardly any money left, and the woman refused to pay her for her week's work.

Nellie knew of no other employment agency, so she was obliged to return to the one she left. When she reproached the agent for sending her to a disreputable house he shrugged his shoulders and replied: "Well, I send girls where they're wanted. If they don't like the place they can leave."

The fact is, they cannot always leave when they want to. Miss Kellor's investigators found an office in Chicago which sent girls to a resort in Wisconsin which was represented as a summer hotel. This notorious place was

surrounded by a high stockade which rendered escape impossible.

The investigators found offices in other cities which operate disreputable houses in summer places. To these the proprietors send the handsomest of their applicants for honest work.

Three girls sent to a house of this kind found themselves prisoners. One girl made such a disturbance by screaming and crying that the proprietor literally kicked her out of the house. The investigators for the Intermunicipal Committee on Household Research saw this girl in a hospital, insane and dying from the treatment she had received. Another of the three escaped from the place. She, too, was discovered in a state of dementia. The fate of the third girl is obscure.

Not all employment agencies cater to this trade. Not all would consent to be accessory to women's degradation. But the employment agency business, taken by and large, is disorganized, haphazard, out of date. It is oper-

THE SERVANT GIRL AND THE EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

Between jobs; girls waiting for employment at an agency. They are frequently fleeced and often morally endangered

ated on a system founded in lies and extortion. The offices want fees — fees from servants and fees from employers. They encourage servants to change their employment as often as possible. Often a firm will send a girl to a place, and a week or two later will send her word that they have a better job for her. Sometimes they arrange with her to leave her place after a certain period, promising her an easier position or a better wage. They favor the girl who changes often. "You 're a nice kind of a customer!" jeered one proprietor to a girl who boasted that she had been in a family for five years. The girl was a *customer* to him, and she was nothing more.

To his profitable customer the agent is often very accommodating. If she lacks references he writes her flattering ones, or loans her a reference written by some woman of prominence. References, indeed, are often handed around like passports among Russian revolutionists.

Many of these unpleasant facts were brought

to light in the course of the investigation made by the Intermunicipal Committee on Household Research. The result of their report was a model employment agency law, passed by the New York State Legislature, providing for a strict licensing system, rigid forms of contract, regulation of fees, and inspection by special officers of the Bureau of Licenses. The law applies only to cities of the first class, and unfortunately has never been very well enforced. Perhaps it has not been possible to enforce it.

In all the cities examined by the Intermunicipal Committee on Household Research the investigators found the majority of employment agencies in close connection with the homes of the agents. In New York, of three hundred and thirteen offices visited, one hundred and twenty were in tenements, one hundred and seven in apartment houses, thirty-nine in residences and only forty-nine in business buildings. In Philadelphia, only three per cent of employment agencies were found in business buildings. Chicago made a little better show-

ing, with nineteen per cent in business houses. The difficulty of properly regulating a business which is carried on in the privacy of a home is apparent. When an agency is in a business building it usually has conspicuous signs, and often the rooms are well equipped with desks, comfortable chairs, and other office furnishings. But the majority of agencies are of another description. Those dealing with immigrant girls are sometimes filthy rooms in some rear tenement, reached through a saloon or a barber shop facing the street. Often the other tenants of the building are fortune tellers, palmists, "trance mediums," and like undesirables.

A large number of these agencies operate lodging houses for their patrons. There is hardly a good word to say for most of these, except that they are absolutely necessary. Dirty, unsanitary, miserable as they usually are, if they were closed by law, hundreds, perhaps thousands of domestics temporarily out of work, would be turned into the streets. Many are unfamiliar with the cities they live

in. Many more are barred from hotels on account of small means. Often a girl finding it impossible to bring herself to lie down on the wretched beds provided by these lodging houses, leaves her luggage and goes out, not to return until morning. She spends the night in dance halls and other resorts.

According to Miss Kellor's report this description of employment agencies and lodging houses attached to them applies to about seventy-five per cent of all offices in the four cities examined. For greater accuracy the investigators made a brief survey of conditions in cities, such as St. Louis, New Haven, and Columbus, Ohio. The differences were slight, showing that the employment agency problem is much the same east and west.

Domestic servants have their industrial ups and downs like other workers. Sometimes they are able to pay the fees required in a high-class employment office, while at other times they are obliged to have recourse to the cheaper places, where standards of honesty, and per-

haps also, of propriety, are low. Domestic workers are the nomads of industry. Their lives are like their work, — impermanent, detached from others', unobserved.

It is for the housekeepers of America to consider the plain facts concerning domestic service. Some of the conditions they can change. Others they cannot. No one can alter the economic status of the kitchen. Like the sweat shop, it must ultimately disappear.

What system of housekeeping will take the place of the present system cannot precisely be foretold. We know that the whole trend of things everywhere is toward co-operation. Within the past ten years think how much cooking has gone into the factory, how much washing into the steam laundry, how much sewing into the shop. As the cost of living increases, more and more co-operation will be necessary, especially for those of moderate income. At the present time millions of city dwellers have given up living in their own houses, or even in rented houses. They can-

not afford to maintain individual homes, but must live in apartment houses, where the expenses of heat, and other expenses, notably water, hall, and janitor service, are reduced to a minimum because shared by all the tenants. There may come a time when the private kitchen will be a luxury of the very rich.

For a time, however, the private kitchen and the servant in the kitchen will remain. That is one servant problem. But the housekeeper still has another "servant problem," and I have tried to make it clear that this problem pretty closely involves the morals of the community.

Now this matter of community morals has begun to interest women profoundly. In many of their organizations women are studying and endeavoring to understand the causes of evil. They are securing the appointment of educated women as probation officers in the courts which deal with delinquent women and girls. Sincerely they are working toward a

better understanding of the problem of the prodigal daughter.

Since about one-third of all these prodigals are recruited from the ranks of domestic workers it is possible for the housekeepers of the country to play an important part in this work. Every woman in the United States who employs one servant has a contribution to make to the movement. The power to humanize domestic service in her own household is in every woman's hand.

Loneliness, social isolation, the ban of social inferiority, — these cruel and unreasonable restrictions placed upon an entire class of working women are out of tune with democracy. The right of the domestic worker to regular hours of labor, to freedom after her work is done, to a place to receive her friends, must be recognized. The self-respect of the servant must in all ways be encouraged.

Above all, the right of the domestic worker to social opportunity must be admitted. It must be provided for.

Yonkers, New York, a large town on the Hudson River, points out one way toward this end. In Yonkers there has been established a Women's Institute for the exclusive use of domestics. It has an employment agency and supports classes in domestic science for those girls who wish to become more expert workers. There are club rooms and recreation parlors where the girls receive and meet their friends — including their men friends. A group of liberal-minded women established this unique institution, which is well patronized by the superior class of domestic workers in Yonkers. The dues are small, and members are allowed to share club privileges with friends. It is not unusual for employers to present their domestics with membership cards. It cannot be said that the Women's Institute has solved the servant problem for Yonkers, but many women testify to its happy effects on their own individual problems.

The Committee on Amusements and Vacation Resources of Working Girls in New York

is collecting a long list of farmhouses and village homes in the mountains and near the sea where working girls, and this includes domestics, may spend their vacations for very little money.

Every summer, as families leave the city for country and seaside, domestics are thrown out of employment. A department in the Women's Club can examine vacation possibilities for domestics. The clubs can also deal with the employment agency. Some women's organizations have already taken hold of this department. The Women's Educational and Industrial Union of Boston conducts a very large and flourishing employment agency. Women's clubs can study the laws of their own community in regard to public employment agencies. They can investigate homes for immigrant girls and boarding-houses for working women.

Preventive work is better than reform measures, but both are necessary in dealing with this problem. Women have still much work

to do in securing reformatories for women. New York is the first State to establish such reformatories for adult women. Private philanthropy has offered refuges and semipenal institutions. The State stands aloof.

Even in New York public officials are strangely skeptical of the possibilities of reform. Last year the courts of New York City sent three thousand delinquent women to the workhouse on Blackwell's Island, — a place notorious for the low state of its *morale*. They sent only seventeen women to Bedford Reformatory, where a healthy routine of outdoor work, and a most effective system administered by a scientific penologist does wonders with its inmates. Nothing but the will and the organized effort of women will ever solve the most terrible of all problems, or remove from society the reproach of ruined womanhood which blackens it now.

CHAPTER X

VOTES FOR WOMEN

Although Woman Suffrage has been for a number of years a part of the program of the International Council of Women, the American Branch, represented by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, at first displayed little interest in the subject. Although many of the club women were strong suffragists, there were many others, notably women from the Southern States, who were violently opposed to suffrage. Early in the club movement it was agreed that suffrage, being a subject on which there was an apparently hopeless difference of opinion, was not a proper subject for club consideration.

The position of the women in regard to suffrage was precisely that of the early labor unions toward politics. The unions, fearing

that the labor leaders would use the men for their own political advancement, resolved that no question of politics should ever enter into their deliberations.

In the same way the club women feared that even a discussion of Woman Suffrage in their state and national federation meetings would result in their movement becoming purely political. They wanted to keep it a non-partisan benevolent and social affair.

Somehow, in what mysterious manner no one can precisely tell, the reserve of the club women towards the suffrage question began some years ago to break down. At the St. Louis Biennial of 1904 part of a morning session was given up to the suffrage organizations. Several remarkable speeches in favor of the suffrage were made, and there is no doubt that a very deep impression was made, even upon those women openly opposed to the movement. Six years later, at the biennial meeting held in Cincinnati, Ohio, in June, 1910, an entire evening was given up to an

SUFFRAGETTES IN LONDON ADVERTISING A MEETING

exhaustive discussion of both sides of the question.

Dating from that evening a stranger visiting the convention might almost have thought that the sole object of the gathering was a discussion of the right of women to the ballot. Women floated through the corridors of the hotel talking suffrage. They talked suffrage in little groups in the dining-room, they discussed it in the street cars going to and from the convention.

The local suffrage clubs had planned a banquet to the visiting suffragists and had calculated a maximum of one hundred and fifty applications for tickets.

Three days before the banquet they had had nearly three hundred applications, and when the hour for the banquet arrived every available seat, the room's limit of three hundred and seventy-five, was occupied. Outside were women offering ten dollars a plate and clamoring for the privilege of merely listening to the after-dinner speakers. Something must

have happened in the course of those eight years to make such an astounding change in the attitude of the club women.

The fact is that until the club women had been at work at practical things for a long period of years, they did not realize the social value of their own activities. They thought of their work as benevolent and philanthropic. That they were performing community service, *citizens'* service, they did not remotely dream. There is nothing surprising in their *naïveté*. It is a fact that in this country, although every one knows that women own property, pay taxes, successfully manage their own business affairs, and do an astonishing amount of community work as well, no one ever thinks of them as citizens.

American men are accustomed to women in almost all trades and professions. It does n't astonish a New Yorker to see a hospital ambulance tearing down the street with a white-clad woman surgeon on the back seat. A woman lawyer, architect, editor, manufac-

turer, excites no particular notice. In the Western States men are beginning to elect women county treasurers, county superintendents of schools, and in Chicago, second largest city in the country, a Board of Education, overwhelmingly masculine, recently appointed a woman City Superintendent of Schools.

Yet to the vast majority of American men women do not look like citizens.

As for the majority of American women they have always until recently thought of themselves as a class, — a favored and protected class. They cherished a sentimental kind of delusion that the American man was only too anxious to give them everything that their hearts desired. When they got out into the world of action, when they began to ask for something more substantial than bonbons, the club women found that the American man was not so very generous after all.

A typical instance occurred down in Georgia. A few years ago the women of Georgia found a way to introduce into the legislature a child-

labor law. It was really a very modest little bill and it protected only a fraction of the pitiful army of cotton-mill children, but still it was worth having. The women worked hard and they got some very powerful backing and a barrel or two of petitions. Nevertheless, the bill was defeated. One legislative orator rose to explain his vote.

"Mr. Speaker," he said eloquently, "I am devoted to the good women of my State. If I thought that the women of my State wanted this bill passed I would vote for it; but, sir, I have every reason to believe that the good women of my State are opposed to this bill, and therefore —"

At this juncture another member handed to the orator a petition bearing the name of five thousand of the best known women in Georgia. The orator stammered, turned red, felt for his handkerchief, mopped his brow, and continued: "Mr. Speaker, I deeply regret that I did not see this petition yesterday. As it is, my vote is pledged."

Incidents of this kind have occurred too frequently for the women of the United States to escape their meaning. They have learned that they cannot have everything they want merely by asking for it. Also they have learned, or a large number of them have learned that the old theory of women being represented at the polls by their husbands is very largely a delusion.

The entrance of women in large numbers into labor unions, and into membership in the Women's Trade Union League is another factor in the increasing interest of American women in suffrage. After a decision of the New York Court of Appeals that the law prohibiting night work of women was unconstitutional, nearly one thousand women bookbinders in New York City made a public announcement that they would thenceforth work for the ballot. They had been indifferent before, but this close application of politics to their industrial situation — bookbinding is one of the night trades — made them alive to their own helplessness.

The shirt-waist strike and the garment workers' strike in New York and Philadelphia, waged so bitterly in 1910, brought great numbers of women into the suffrage ranks. Not only were the women strikers convinced that the magistrates and the police treated them with more contempt than they did the voting men, but they perceived the need of securing better labor laws for themselves. The conviction that women of the wealthier classes would stand by them in securing favorable laws, as they stood by the strikers in the industrial struggle, was a strong lever to turn them towards the suffrage ranks.

The Women's Trade Union League building, used as strike headquarters in all strikes involving women workers, is a veritable center of suffrage sentiment in New York! One floor houses the offices of the Equality League of Self Supporting Women, of which Harriot Stanton Blatch is founder and president. This society, which is entirely made up of trade and professional workers, claims an approximate

MRS. HARRIOT STANTON BLATCH

Daughter of Elizabeth Cady Stanton — Leader of twenty thousand self-supporting women who want the ballot.

membership of twenty-two thousand. A number of unions belong to the League, and there is also a very large individual membership.

In Chicago the suffrage movement and the labor movement is more closely associated than in any other American city. In Chicago, it will be remembered, the Teachers' Federation is a trade union and is allied to the Central Labor Union. Teachers, almost everywhere denied equal pay with men for equal work, are eager seekers for political power. When, as in Chicago, they are associated with labor, they become convinced suffragists.

Organized labor has always been friendly to woman suffrage, but in Chicago not only the union women but the union men are actively friendly towards the cause. The original moving spirit in the Chicago organization was a remarkable young working girl, Josephine Casey. Miss Casey sold tickets at one of the stations of the Chicago Elevated, and she formed her first woman suffrage club among the women members of the Union of Street

and Elevated Railway Employees. Later she organized on a larger scale the Women's Political Equality Union, with membership open to men and women alike. The interest shown in the union by workingmen, many of whom had never before given the matter a moment's thought, was, from the first, extraordinary. During the first winter of the society's existence, union after union called for Woman Suffrage speakers. Addresses were made before fifty or more. Some of the more popular speakers often made four addresses in an evening. Mrs. Raymond Robins, president of the National Women's Trade Union League, and Miss Alice Henry, secretary of the Chicago branch of the League, won many converts by their expositions of the exceedingly favorable labor laws of Australia and New Zealand, where women vote.

Unquestionably the mighty battle which is waging in England made a deep impression on American women of all classes. The visits made in this country by Mrs. Cobden Sander-

MEETING A RELEASED SUFFRAGETTE PRISONER

The English women have taught the Americans that suffrage is worth fighting for, suffering for, dying for.

son, Mrs. Borrman Wells, Mrs. Philip Snowden, and, most of all, Mrs. Pankhurst, leader of the militant English Suffragists, aroused tremendous enthusiasm from one end of the country to the other. Never, until these women appeared, telling, with rare eloquence, their stories of struggle, of arrest and imprisonment, had the vote appeared such an incomparable treasure. Never before, except among a few enthusiasts, had there existed any feeling that the suffrage was a thing to fight for, suffer for, even to die for.

Up to this time the suffrage was a theory, an academic question of right and justice. After the visits of the English women, American suffragists everywhere began to view their cause in the light of a political movement. They began to adopt political methods. Instead of private meetings where suffrage was discussed before a select audience of the already convinced, the women began to mount soap boxes on street corners and to talk suffrage to the man in the street.

The first suffrage demonstration was held in New York in February, 1908. The members of a small but enthusiastic Equal Suffrage Club announced their intention of having a parade. Most of the women being wage earners they planned to have their parade on a Sunday. When they applied at Police Headquarters for the necessary permit they found to their disgust that Sunday parades were forbidden by law.

"Not unless you are a funeral procession," said the stern captain of the police.

The woman replied that they were anything but a funeral procession, and threatened darkly to hold their parade in spite of police regulations. They got plenty of newspaper publicity in the succeeding days, and on the following Sunday a huge crowd of men, a sprinkling of women, a generous number of plain clothes men, and New York's famous "camera squad" assembled in Union Square, where all incendiary things happen. The dauntless seven who made up the suffrage club were there, and at

the psychological moment one of the women ran up the steps of a park pavilion and spoke in a ringing voice, yet so quietly that the police made no move to stop her.

"Friends," she said, "we are not allowed to have our parade, so we are going to hold a meeting of protest at No. 209 East 23d Street. We invite you to go over there with us." She and the others walked calmly out of the square, and the crowd followed. They turned into Fifth Avenue, and the crowd grew larger. Before three blocks were passed there were literally thousands of people marching in the wake of ingenious suffragists.

The sight aroused the indignation of many respectable citizens.

"Officer," exclaimed one of these, addressing an attendant policeman, "I thought you had orders that those females were not to parade."

"That ain't no parade," said the policeman, serenely; "them folks is just takin' a quiet walk."

The suffragists have taken more than one quiet walk since then. Street speaking has become an almost daily occurrence. At first there was some rioting, or, rather, some display of rowdyism on the part of the spectators and some show of interference from the police. The crowds listen respectfully now, and the police are friendly.

The most practical move the New York Suffragists have made was the organization, early in 1910, of the Woman Suffrage Party, a fusion of nearly all the suffrage clubs in the greater city into an association exactly along the lines of a regular political party. At the head of the party as president is Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, president of the International Woman Suffrage Association. Each of the five boroughs of the city has a chairman, and each senatorial and assembly district is either organized or is in process of organization.

Absolutely democratic in its spirit and its organization, the party leaders are drawn from every rank of society. The chairman of the

THE WOMEN'S TRADES PROCESSION TO THE ALBERT HALL MEETING, APRIL 27, 1909

The Suffrage movement has broken down class lines. In the famous London parade, April 27, 1909, the women chain makers and the pit-brow workers — the hardest-working women in England — were given the place of honor.

borough of Manhattan is Mrs. James Lees Laidlaw, wife of a prominent Wall Street banker. Mrs. Frederick Nathan, president of the New York State Consumers' League, is chairman of the assembly district in which she lives. Mrs. Melvil Dewey, whose husband is head of a department at Columbia University, is chairman of her own district. Other chairmen are Helen Hoy Greeley, lawyer; Lavinia Dock, trained nurse; Anna Mercy, an East Side physician; Maud Flowerton, buyer in a department store; Gertrude Barnum, sociologist and writer. Practically every trade and profession are represented in the party's ranks.

The object of the Woman Suffrage Party is organization for political work. Last winter the party made the first aggressive move towards forcing the Judiciary Committee of the Assembly to report on the bill to give women votes by constitutional amendment. They succeeded in getting a motion made for the discharge of the committee, sixteen legislators voting for the women.

New York is the present center of the progressive suffrage movement, with Chicago not very far behind.

In rather amazing fashion are women in many American communities beginning to realize that politics are as much their business as men's. In Salt Lake City when a city council undertakes to give away a valuable water franchise, or extend gamblers' privileges, or otherwise follow the example of many another city council in bending before the god of greed, the women of Salt Lake send the word around. When the council meets the women are in the room. They don't say anything. They don't have to say anything. They can vote, these women. More than once the deep-laid plans of the most powerful politicians in Salt Lake City have been completely frustrated by a silent warning from the women. The city council has not dared to pass grafting measures with a roomful of women looking on.

Even the non-voting woman has discovered the power which attaches to her presence, in

HELEN HOY GREELEY

One of Assembly District Leaders in the New York City Woman Suffrage Party

certain circumstances. In San Francisco during the second Ruef trial, when the decent element of the city was fighting to down one of the worst bosses that ever cursed a community, the women, under the leadership of Mrs. Elizabeth Gerberding, performed this new kind of picket duty. The courtroom where the trial was held was, by order of the boss's attorney, packed with hired toughs whose duty it was to make a mockery of the prosecution. Every point against the Ruef side was received by these toughs with jeers and hootings. The district attorney was insulted, badgered, and openly threatened with violence.

Mrs. Gerberding, whose husband is editor of a newspaper opposed to boss rule, attended several sessions, and induced a large number of women of social importance to attend with her. These women went daily to the courtroom, occupying seats to the exclusion of many of the tough characters, and by their presence doing much to preserve order and to assist the efforts of the district attorney. When the assassin's

bullet was fired at the district attorney a number of the women were present.

Out of the horror and detestation of this crime was organized the Women's League of Justice, which soon had a membership of five hundred. The league fought stoutly for the re-election of Heney as district attorney. Heney was defeated, and the league became the Women's Civic Club of San Francisco, pledged to work for political betterment and a clean city government.

In four States of the Union, Washington, Oregon, South Dakota, and Oklahoma, the voters will this autumn vote for or against constitutional amendments giving women the right to vote. It is not very probable that the Suffragists will win in any of these States, not because the voters are opposed to suffrage, but because they are, for the most part, uninformed. The suffrage advocates have not yet learned enough political wisdom to further their cause through education of the voters.

Although enormous sums of money have been spent in suffrage campaigns, in no one has enough money been available to do the work thoroughly. In the four States where the question is at present before the voters, complaint is made that there is not enough money in the treasuries properly to circulate literature.

Many of the wisest leaders in the National Woman Suffrage Association, including Dr. Anna Shaw, Ida Husted Harper, and others, are advising an altogether new method of conducting the struggle for the ballot. They advocate selecting a State, possibly Nebraska, where conditions seem uncommonly favorable, and concentrating the entire strength of the national organization, every dollar of money in the national treasury, all the speakers and organizers, all the literature, in a mighty effort to give the women of that one State the ballot. The vote won in Nebraska, the national association should pass on to the next most favorable State and win a victory there. The moral

effect of such campaigns would no doubt be very great.

One of the principal reasons why men hesitate in this country to give the voting power to women is that they do not know, and they rather fear to guess, how far women would unite in forcing their own policies on the country. If an Irish vote, or a German vote, or a Catholic vote, or a Hebrew vote is to be dreaded, say the men, how much more of a menace would a woman vote be. I heard a man, a delegate from an anti-suffrage association, solemnly warn the New York State Legislature, at a suffrage hearing, against this danger of a woman vote. "When the majority of women and the minority of men vote together," he declared, "there will be no such thing as personal liberty left in the United States."

Under certain conditions a woman vote is not an unthinkable contingency. It has even occurred.

For the edification of the possible reader

SUFFRAGETTES IN MADISON SQUARE

who is entirely uninformed, it may be explained that women are not entirely disenfranchised in the United States. Women vote on equal terms with men, in four States. They have voted in Wyoming since 1869; in Colorado since 1894; in Utah and Idaho since 1896. They vote at school elections and on certain questions of taxation in twenty-eight States.

While it is true that in the States which have a small measure of suffrage the women show little interest in voting, in the four so-called suffrage States, they vote conscientiously and in about the same proportion as men.

But here is a notable thing. The women of the suffrage States differ so little from the women of other States, and women in general, that the chief concerns of their lives are the home, the school, and the baby, — the Kaiser's "Kirche, Küche, und Kinder" over again. They vote with enthusiasm on all questions which relate to domestic interests, that is, which directly relate to them and their chil-

dren. Aside from this, the woman vote has made a deep impression on the moral character of candidates and that is about all it has meant. In general politics women have counted scarcely more than have the women of other States.

But the new interest in suffrage, the new realization of themselves as citizens that has been aroused all over the United States within the past two years have seriously affected the women voters of at least one suffrage State, Colorado.

The women of Colorado, especially the women of Denver, have for several years taken an active part in legislation directly affecting themselves and their children. The legislative committee of the Colorado State Federation of Clubs has held regular meetings during the sessions of the State Legislature, and it has been a regular custom to submit to that committee for approval all bills relating to women and children. This never seemed to the politicians to be anything very dangerous to their

interests. It was, in a manner of speaking, a chivalric acknowledgment of women's virtue as wives and mothers.

But lately the women of Colorado have begun to wake up to the fact that not only special legislation, but all legislation, is of direct interest to them. It has lately dawned upon them that the matter of street railway franchise affects the home as directly as a proposition to erect a high school. Also it has dawned on them that without organization, and more organization, the woman vote was more or less powerless. So, about a year ago they formed in Denver an association of women which they called the Public Service League. Nothing quite like it ever existed before. It is a political but non-partisan association of women, pledged to work for the civic betterment of Denver, pledged to fight the corrupt politicians, determined that the city government shall be well administered even if the women have to take over the offices themselves. The League is, in effect, a secret society of women.

It has an inflexible rule that its proceedings are to be kept inviolable. There is a perfect understanding that any woman who divulges one syllable of what occurs at a meeting of the League will be instantly dropped from membership. No woman has yet been dropped.

It may well be understood that this secret society of women, this non-partisan league of voters, is a thing to strike terror into the heart of a ward boss. As a matter of fact, the corrupt politicians and the equally corrupt heads of corporations who had long held Denver in bondage regard the Public Service League in mingled dread and detestation. Equally as a matter of fact politicians of a better class are anxious to enlist the good will of the League. Last summer a Denver election involved a question of granting a twenty years' franchise to a street railway company. Opposed to the granting of the franchise was a newly formed citizens' party. Opposed also was the Women's Public Service League. In gratitude

for the co-operation of the League the Citizens' Party offered a place on the electoral ticket to any woman chosen by the League.

It was the first time in the history of Colorado that a municipal office had been offered to a woman, and the League promptly took advantage of it. They named as a candidate for Election Commissioner Miss Ellis Meredith, one of the best known, best loved women in the State. As journalist and author and club woman Miss Meredith is known far beyond her own State, and her nomination created intense interest not only among the women of her own city and State, but among club women everywhere.

On the evening of May 3, 1910, there was a meeting held in the Broadway Theater, Denver, the like of which no American city ever before witnessed. It was a women's political mass meeting to endorse the candidacy of a woman municipal official. The meeting was entirely in the hands of women. Presiding over the immense throng was Mrs. Sarah Platt

Decker, formerly president, and still leader of the General Federation of Women's Clubs. Beside her sat Mrs. Helen Grenfell, for thirteen years county and State superintendent of schools, Mrs. Helen Ring Robinson, Mrs. Martha A. B. Conine, and Miss Gail Laughlin, all women of note in their community. The enthusiasm aroused by that meeting did not subside, and on the day of the election Miss Meredith ran so far ahead of her ticket that it seemed as if every woman in Denver, as well as most of the men, had voted for her. She took her place in the Board of Election Commissioners, and was promptly elected Chairman of the Board.

There is nothing especially attractive about the office of Election Commissioner. In accepting the nomination Miss Meredith said frankly that she was influenced mainly by two things: first a desire to test the loyalty of the women voters, and second, because, while women had been held accountable for elections which have disgraced the city of Denver, they

have never before been given a chance to manage the elections.

Nothing is more certain that women, when they become enfranchised, will never, in any large numbers, appear as office seekers. It is probable that office will be thrust upon the ablest of them. Mrs. Sarah Platt Decker has been spoken of as a possible future Mayor of Denver, and it is certain that she could be elected to Congress if she would allow herself to be placed in nomination.

A few women have been elected to the legislatures in the suffrage States, and they have held high office in educational departments. In suffrage and nonsuffrage States they have been elected to many county offices. Miss Gertrude Jordan is Treasurer of Cherry County, Nebraska. In Idaho, Texas, Louisiana, and several other States women have filled the same position. The State of Kansas is a true believer in women office-holders, even though it refuses its women complete suffrage. Women can vote in Kansas only at municipal elections,

but in forty counties men have elected women school superintendents. They are clerks of four counties, treasurers of three, and commissioners of one. In one county of Kansas a woman is probate judge. The good and faithful work done by these women ought to go a long way towards educating men of their community to the idea of political association with women.

The attitude of men towards suffrage has undergone an enormous change within the past two years. A large number of the thinking men of the country have openly enlisted in the Suffrage ranks. It is said that almost every member of the faculty of Columbia University signed the Suffrage petition presented to the Congress of 1909. Well-known professors of many Western universities and colleges have spoken and written in favor of equal suffrage. In New York City a flourishing Voters' League for Equal Suffrage has been formed, with a membership running into the hundreds.

THE "QUIET WALK" OF THE NEW YORK SUFFRAGISTS, WHOM THE POLICE WOULD NOT PERMIT TO PARADE

To the average unprejudiced man the old arguments against political equality have almost entirely lost weight. The theory that women should not vote because they cannot fight is now rarely argued. Municipal governments certainly no longer rest on physical force. The same is true of state governments, and it is probably true of national governments. At all events we are sincerely trying to make it true.

For the rest it would be extremely difficult to prove that women would make undesirable citizens. To the anxious inquiry, What will women do with their votes? the answer is simple. They will do with their votes precisely what they do, or try to do, without votes. This has been proven in every country in the world where they have received the franchise. In Australia, New Zealand, Finland, and in the English municipalities the ideal of the common good has been reflected in the woman vote. Social legislation alone interests women, and so far they have confined their efforts to

matters of education, child labor, pure food, sanitation, control of liquor traffic, and public morals. The organized non-voting women of this country have devoted themselves for years to precisely these objects. Without votes, without precedents, and without very much money they instituted the playground movement, and the juvenile court movement, two of the greatest reforms this country has contributed to civilization. They have instituted a dozen reforms in our educational system. They practically invented the town and village improvement idea. They have co-operated with every social reform advocated by men, and it is to be noted that wherever their judgment has been in error they have conscientiously erred in favor of a wider democracy, a more exalted social ideal.

However long-deferred Woman Suffrage may prove to be, it is pretty generally conceded that women will inevitably vote some day. The evolution of society will bring them into political equality with men just as it has

SUFFRAGE DEMONSTRATION IN UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK

Two thousand women and eight thousand men packed the Square for several hours, while eloquent pleas were made from a dozen platforms.

brought them into intellectual and industrial equality. The first woman who followed her spinning-wheel out of her home into the factory was the natural ancestress of the first woman who demanded the ballot.

The application of steam to machinery took women's trades out of the home and placed them in the factory. The effect of this was that men were confronted with a singular dilemma. They had to choose between two courses; they had to support their women in idleness, or else they had to allow them to leave the home and go where their trades had gone. The first course involving the intolerable burden of doing their own and their women's work, they were obliged to choose the second. The jealously-guarded doors of the home were opened, and little by little, grudgingly, the men admitted women to full industrial freedom.

Women's housekeeping, or most of it, has gradually been withdrawn from the home and transferred to the municipality. There was

a time when women could ensure their families pure food, good milk, clean ice, proper sanitation. They cannot do that now. The City Hall governs all such matters. Again the men find themselves facing the old dilemma. They must either support their women in idleness — do all their own as well as the women's housekeeping — or they must allow their women to leave the home and follow their housekeeping to the place where it is now being done, — the polls.

Women are beginning to understand the situation. They are even beginning to understand how badly the men are providing for the municipal family. They are demanding their old housekeeping tasks back again. To this point has the Suffrage movement, begun in 1848 by a band of women called fanatics, arrived.

CHAPTER XI

IN CONCLUSION

I have tried to set down in these pages the collective opinion of women, as far as it has expressed itself through deeds. I have not succeeded if any reader lays down the book with the impression that he has merely been reading the story of the American club woman. I have not succeeded at all if my readers imagine that I have been writing only about a selected group of women. What I have meant to do is to show the instinctive bent of the universal woman mind in all ages, reflected in the actions of the freest group of women the world has ever seen.

I might have reanimated ages of stone and of bronze; might have shown you women, through slow centuries, inventing the arts of spinning and weaving, and pottery molding; learning to build, to till the earth, to grind

and to cook grains, to tan skins for clothing against the cold. No one taught them these things. Out of their brains, as undeveloped and as primitive as the brains of men, they would never have conceived so much wisdom. The vague mind of the savage woman never sent her to the spider, the nesting bird, and the burrowing squirrel to learn to weave and to build and to store. When we find exactly what it was that taught primitive woman how to lay the first stones of civilization, we have a perfect philosophical understanding of all women.

I chose to interpret the woman mind through the modern American woman, partly because she has learned the great lesson of organization, and has thus been able to work more effectively, and to impress her will on the community more strikingly than other women in other ages. What she has done is apparent and easy to prove.

Also, I chose the American club woman because she represents, not an unusually

gifted type, but the average intelligent, well-educated, energetic, wife-and-mother type of woman. The club woman is not radical, or at least not consciously radical. She has not, like the progressive German and Russian woman, theories of political regeneration or of family reconstruction. What she desires, what ideals she has formed, I think must fairly represent the desires and ideals of the great mass of women of the twentieth century.

When we survey the activities the club women have engaged in, when we discover why they chose exactly these activities, we have a perfect philosophical understanding, not only of the modern woman mind, but of the cave woman mind and all the woman mind in between.

The woman mind is the most unchangeable thing in the world. It has turned on identically the same pivot since the present race began. Perhaps before.

Turn back and count over the club women's achievements, the things they have chosen to

do, the things they want. Observe first of all that they want very little for themselves. Even their political liberty they want only because it will enable them to get other things — things needed, directly or indirectly, by children. Most of the things are directly needed, — playgrounds, school gardens, child-labor laws, juvenile courts, kindergartens, pure food laws, and other visible tokens of child concern. Many of the other things are indirectly needed by children, — ten-hour working days, seats for shop girls, protection from dangerous machinery, living wages, opportunities for safe and wholesome pleasures, peace and arbitration, social purity, legal equality with men, all objects which tend to conserve the future mothers of children. These are the things women want.

In my introductory chapter I cited three extremely grave and significant facts which confront modern civilization. The first was the fact of women's growing economic freedom, their emancipation from domestic slavery.

I believe that women would not wish to be economically free if their instinct gave them any warning that freedom for them meant danger to their children. But no observer of social conditions can have failed to observe the oceans of misery endured by women and children because of their economic dependence on the fortunes of husbands and fathers.

Whatever may be the solution of poverty, whatever be the future status of the family, it seems certain to me that some way will be devised whereby motherhood will cease to be a privately supported profession. In some way society will pay its own account. If producing citizens to the State be the greatest service a woman citizen can perform, the State will ultimately recognize the right of the woman citizen to protection during her time of service. The first step towards solving the problem is for women to learn to support themselves before the time comes for them to serve the State. Through the educat-

ing process of productive labor the woman mind may devise a means of protecting the future mothers of the race.

The second fact, the growing prevalence of divorce, on the face of it seems to menace the security of the home and of children. So deeply overlain with prejudice, conventionalities, and theological traditions is the average woman as well as the average man that it is difficult to argue in favor of a temporary tolerance of divorce that a permanent high standard of marriage may be established. But to my mind any state of affairs, even a Reno state of affairs, looks more encouraging than the old conditions under which innocent girls married to rakes and drunkards were forbidden to escape their chains. It is not for the good of children to be born of disease and misery and hatred. It is not for their good to be brought up in an atmosphere of hopeless inharmony. What is happening in this country is not a weakening of the marriage bond, but a strengthening of it. For soon

there will grow up in the American man's mind a desire for a marriage which will be at least as equitable as a business partnership; as fair to one party as to the other. He will cease to regard marriage as a state of bondage for the wife and a state of license for the husband. He will not venture to suggest to a bright woman that cooking in his kitchen is a more honorable career than teaching, or painting, or writing, or manufacturing. Marriage will not mean extinction to any woman. It will mean to the well-to-do wife freedom to do community service. It will mean to the industrial woman an economic burden shared. When that time comes there will be no divorce problem. There will be no longer a class of women who avoid the risk of divorce by refusing to marry.

The third fact, the increasing popularity of woman suffrage, I disposed of in the preceding chapter. Nothing that the women who vote have ever done indicates, in the remotest degree, that they are not just as mindful of

children's interests at the polls as other women are in their nurseries and kitchens.

On the contrary, wherever women have left their kitchens and nurseries, whenever they have gone out into the world of action and of affairs, they have increased their effectiveness as mothers. I do not mean by this that the girl who enters a factory at fourteen and works there ten hours a day until she marries increases her effectiveness as a mother. Industrial slavery unfits a woman for motherhood as certainly as intellectual and moral slavery unfits her.

Women who are free, who look on life through their own eyes, who think their own thoughts, who live in the real world of striving, struggling, suffering humanity, are the most effective mothers that ever lived. They know how to care for their own children, and more than that, they know how to care for the community's children.

The child at his mother's knee, spelling out the words of a psalm, stands for the moral

education of the race — or it used to. A group of Chicago club women walking boldly into the city Bridewell and the Cook County Jail and demanding that children of ten and twelve should no longer be locked up with criminals; these same women, after the children were segregated, establishing a school for them, and finally these same women achieving a juvenile court, is the modern edition of the old ideal.

Woman's place is in the home. This is a platitude which no woman will ever dissent from, provided two words are dropped out of it. Woman's place is Home. Her task is homemaking. Her talents, as a rule, are mainly for homemaking. But Home is not contained within the four walls of an individual home. Home is the community. The city full of people is the Family. The public school is the real Nursery. And badly do the Home and the Family and the Nursery need their mother.

I dream of a community where men and

women divide the work of governing and administering, each according to his special capacities and natural abilities. The division of labor between them will be on natural and not conventional lines. No one will be rewarded according to sex, but according to work performed. The city will be like a great, well-ordered, comfortable, sanitary household. Everything will be as clean as in a good home. Every one, as in a family, will have enough to eat, clothes to wear, and a good bed to sleep on. There will be no slums, no sweat shops, no sad women and children toiling in tenement rooms. There will be no babies dying because of an impure milk supply. There will be no "lung blocks" poisoning human beings that landlords may pile up sordid profits. No painted girls, with hunger gnawing at their empty stomachs, will walk in the shadows. All the family will be taken care of, taught to take care of themselves, protected in their daily tasks, sheltered in their homes.

The evil things in society are simply the result of half the human race, with only half the wisdom, and not even half the moral power contained in the race, trying to rule the world alone. Men's government rests on force, on violence. Everything evil, everything bad, everything selfish, is a form of violence. Poverty itself is a form of violence.

Women will not tolerate violence. They loathe waste. They cannot bear to see illness and suffering and starvation. Alone, they are no more capable of coping with these evils than men are. But they have the very resources that men lack. Working with men they could accomplish miracles.

Note the inventiveness of women, most of which goes to waste because they lack the wonderful constructive ability of men. Women invented spinning. They could never have harnessed the lightning to their wheels. Women established the first public playgrounds. Men extended the public playgrounds across the country.

Women established the juvenile court. Men took it over and worked out a new system of criminal jurisprudence for children. Women have cleaned up a hundred cities. Men are rebuilding them. Slowly men and women are learning to live and work together. Reluctantly men are coming to accept women as their co-workers.

Woman's place is Home, and she must not be forbidden to dwell there. Who would be so selfish, so blind, so reactionary, as to forbid her her fullest freedom to do her work, must surrender opposition in the end. For woman's work is race preservation, race improvement, and who opposes her, or interferes with her, simply fights nature, and nature never loses her battles.

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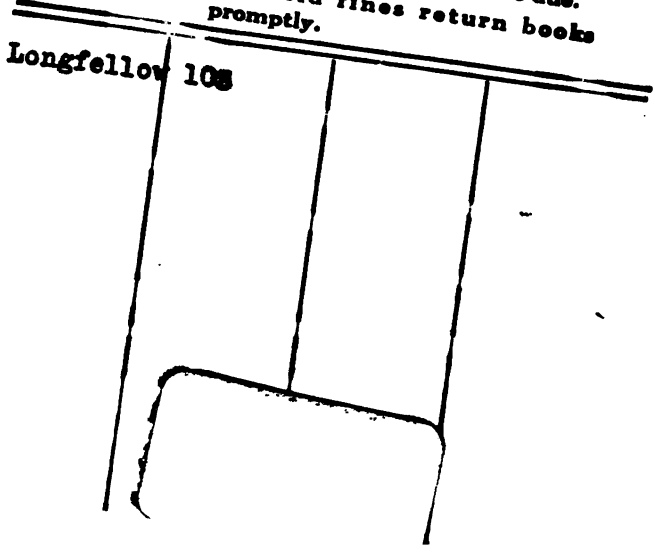
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